

THE JESSE JAMES STORIES

A WEEKLY DEALING WITH THE DETECTION OF CRIME

Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 27.

Price, Five Cents.



THE TRAINED MUSTANG OF THE BANDIT STOPPED SUDDENLY, AND JESSE JAMES, A PRISONER FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE, WAS JERKED FROM HIS HORSE WITH GREAT VIOLENCE.—(CHAPTER LXXXI.)

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No. 27.

NEW YORK, November 9, 1901.

Price Five Cents.

Jesse James' Exploits.

By W. B. LAWSON.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

THE TRAIN ROBBERY.

"Ladies and gentlemen, hide your valuables, quick; there are train robbers outside!"

A westbound passenger train on the Union Pacific Railroad had stopped for water at a tank a few miles east of Ogden, Utah. The conductor stepped to the ground, and started to walk forward to the engine to speak to the engineer. He had made only two steps when he saw half-a-dozen dark forms spring from behind the water-tank and start toward the cars. The conductor had been on the road five years, and he knew at once who the mysterious individuals were. He sprang aboard and shouted a warning to the passengers.

It was near midnight, and half the passengers on the train were lying down on the seats and trying to get a little sleep.

The warning shout of the conductor that robbers were outside awakened most of the sleeping ones.

A moment later the few who still slept were awakened very suddenly.

A score of pistol shots rang out on the night air, there was a crash of breaking window glass, and then a voice outside shouted:

"Hands up inside there, everybody, and keep them up!"

The few ladies among the passengers screamed, and tried to climb on the backs of the seats.

Most of the male passengers swore, and some of them tried to crawl under the seats.

There was a scramble to hide money and jewelry, and a few men lost their presence of mind, and threw their valuables out of the window. Several watches were thrown in the stove, and money was dropped in the water cooler.

But there was little time to hide anything. By the time the sleepy passengers fully realized what was the matter the robbers were at the car door.

The leader of the robbers was a Hercules in proportions.

When he entered the door of the car he held a revolver in each hand, and his face was concealed by a black mask.

"Hands up, and get out your valuables in a hurry, now!" ordered the big robber.

He advanced down the aisle of the car, with his pistols pointing right and left, while two of his men followed close behind, collecting the money and jewelry that was handed over without a protest by the unresisting passengers.

There were two passengers who were making no move to turn over their valuables to the robbers. They were two stalwart, bearded men, who occupied a seat near the rear of the car. Instead of getting out their pocket-

books, they loosened in the scabbards the big pistols that hung from their belts and smiled at the alarm of the other passengers.

With an air of quiet interest, the two men watched the work of the robbers for a moment, and then their attention was attracted by the actions of a young lady, who occupied the seat directly in front of them. As soon as she saw the big robber enter the door she began to wrap a dark veil about her face. She turned to the back door, but there was no escape. That door was guarded by a masked robber, who held a revolver in each hand.

"My God, if he should recognize me I am lost!" the young lady said, in a whisper, as she tugged at the black veil in her efforts to conceal her features.

The words were overheard by the two men who sat behind her, and they exchanged glances, but said nothing.

The actions of the young lady attracted the attention of the leader of the robbers, and he hurried forward to the seat where she was still trying to hide her face.

"Give me a kiss, my dear, and I may let you keep your money."

As the robber spoke he put up one of his pistols, and, reaching over, tore the veil from the young lady's face. Then he gave a long whistle of astonishment.

"So it's you, is it, my pretty Effie? Well, this is luck, but the Lord is always on the side of the righteous," and the big robber gave vent to a coarse laugh.

"Come along, my dear! I had no idea of finding such a treasure aboard, but now that you are here, I'll see that you don't escape me this time."

As the robber spoke, he caught the young lady by the arm and dragged her from the seat. She screamed for help, and ordered him to release her.

"Scream all you like, my dear; none of these brave gentlemen will come to your rescue," said the robber leader, with a mocking laugh.

He was mistaken. As he spoke, the two men on the back seat rose to their feet, and in each hand they held long, gleaming revolvers.

"Release that woman," said the taller of the two men, in a quiet, firm voice, as he leveled a pistol at the head of the robber.

The robber did not hesitate a moment. Quick as a flash he swung the woman around so her body would serve as a shield. The man with the drawn revolver could not fire without danger of hitting the woman.

The big robber placed a silver whistle to his lips and blew three short, sharp signals. Then he began to back toward the door of the car, still holding the woman so she would protect his body.

"Save me! Save me! This man is Dick Dudley, the Mormon bandit!" cried the young woman, as she struggled desperately to free herself.

At the sound of their leader's whistle the other robbers turned their attention to the two men who had drawn revolvers.

"Drop your guns, and put up your hands!"

The two men did not obey the order.

There was a series of flashes and stunning reports that frightened the other passengers almost out of their senses, and when the smoke cleared away two of the robbers lay on the floor dead, while the third one, who had guarded the door, had fallen on the platform outside, mortally wounded.

The two daring passengers were unhurt, and the dead robbers were the ones who had all the money taken from the other travelers.

While the bloody battle had been taking place, the leader of the robbers had reached the front platform of the car, and, still holding the young woman in his arms, leaped to the ground. Another signal from his whistle brought up the remainder of the band, with the horses. Without waiting to ascertain the fate of his men on the car, the robber chief mounted his horse, and, dragging the young woman up before him, dashed away to the north, followed by those of his men who were unhurt.

Before the robbers were out of sight, the conductor, who had been quietly awaiting developments in the baggage car, signaled the engineer to go ahead, and in a few moments the train resumed its journey as though nothing unusual had occurred.

As soon as the other passengers had somewhat recovered from their fright and excitement they crowded about the two men who had dared to attack the robbers. One enthusiastic passenger wanted to make an invoice of the money on the dead robbers, that had been taken from the people on board, and give half of it to the men whose coolness and courage had saved it.

The two strangers were very modest, and seemed to regard what they had done as a mere trifle. They declined to accept any reward.

The passengers soon fell to discussing the robbery and the robbers. A few of them lived in Utah, and to them Dick Dudley, the Mormon bandit, was well known by reputation. He was a terror to the law-abiding Gentiles in Northern Utah.

An elder in the Mormon church, rich and powerful, Dick Dudley did not fear the officers or the laws of the Territory. He knew the church would protect him. He had gathered about him a band of desperadoes, who were ready to obey his orders in anything. Many daring and desperate crimes were charged to him, but he had never been arrested.

Elder Dudley, as the Mormons called him, was a power in the church, and had no less than fifteen wives. He owned large ranches and farms, and his house in the hills

was a castle, where he could flee when pursued for some of his robberies.

None of the passengers or trainmen knew the girl carried off by the Mormon bandit, but they had no doubt that he intended to take her to his home in the hills and make her his wife. She would be number sixteen.

When the train reached the next station, which was only a few miles beyond the scene of the attempted robbery, a young man, who had the appearance of a well-to-do young cattleman, was waiting on the platform. He eagerly watched the few passengers alight, and was about to turn away with a look of disappointment on his face, when the conductor asked him if he had been expecting some one on that train.

"Yes, a young lady; have you seen her?"

"I don't know, can you describe her?"

The young man gave an accurate description of the woman who had been carried off by the Mormon bandit.

Briefly the conductor told him of the events of the evening, and of the abduction of the girl by Dick Dudley.

"The infernal scoundrel!" muttered the young man, who was greatly agitated by the news of the girl's capture.

"There is only one man who can cope with Dick Dudley here in Utah, and that man is Jesse James. I would give half I possess to find him now."

"Jesse James is here!"

The young man on the depot platform wheeled around, and saw two tall, bearded men standing at his side.

"I am Jesse James," one of them said, very quietly.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

CAUGHT IN A TRAP.

The richest planter and ranchman in Northern Utah was John Ellis. He lived in a big stone house on his ranch a few miles west of Ogden. Ellis was a Gentile, but had lived at peace with his Mormon neighbors for many years.

Effie Ellis, the old ranchman's daughter, was the prettiest girl in Utah. She had been educated at an Eastern college, and had traveled in Europe, but when her mother died she came back to the Western home, to remain with her father and keep house for him.

In that wild country it was natural that the handsome and accomplished young lady should have many admirers. The social circle in which she reigned a queen was a small one, but a score of rich, young ranchmen had thrown their hearts at her feet.

Among her many admirers, Effie Ellis encouraged but

one. Jack Webb, a manly young fellow, when he finished his course at Harvard, found that the fortune he expected to inherit his father had lost in speculation. With a few hundred dollars, the young man went West and started in business for himself. He purchased a small cattle ranch in Utah, herded cattle himself, and by close attention to business, was soon on the road to prosperity.

When Jack Webb met Effie Ellis, it was a case of love at first sight on his part, and she could not long conceal the fact that she cared more for him than for any other young man she knew.

The result was that they were soon engaged. Effie's father admired the brave, handsome young ranchman, who had won his daughter's heart, and readily gave his consent to their union.

The date of the wedding had not been fixed. Effie's father asked that they delay the marriage for a while. He would be all alone when his daughter left him. Jack and Effie were both young, and they could wait a while.

Among Ranchman Ellis' Mormon neighbors was Elder Dick Dudley. He was occasionally an uninvited visitor at the Ellis home, and it was easy to learn the object of his visits. He looked with treacherous eyes on the pretty daughter of the Gentile.

John Ellis knew that Dick Dudley was a bold and dangerous man. He had heard the stories quietly circulated that Dudley was the leader of a band of desperate highwaymen, and was the man in the black mask, known far and wide as the Mormon bandit.

In that wild Western country, where nine-tenths of the people were Mormons, it was hard to prove anything against a man who was a leader in the church, and possessed the confidence of the apostles at Salt Lake City.

Ellis feared for the honor and safety of his daughter, and took care to do and say nothing that might anger the notorious elder.

Dudley made no secret of the fact that he believed in and practiced polygamy. He had tried to make converts to Mormonism of Ellis and his daughter without success.

One day while Effie Ellis was alone in the house she received an unexpected visit from Dudley. She was greatly alarmed at his sudden appearance, for she was afraid of him. He was a coarse, brutal man, and very repulsive in appearance.

Miss Ellis tried hard not to betray the fear she felt, and made vain efforts to treat her visitor civilly.

Dudley made no effort to beat about the bush, but stated his business at once. He wanted Miss Ellis to become his wife. He declared that she was the only woman he had ever really loved, and said that much as he loved his church and its teachings, if she would consent to be-

come his wife, he would respect her religion, and would give up all his other wives.

Effie Ellis was at first almost overcome with fright, but finally her indignation overpowered all other emotions. She told Dudley that his proposal was an insult, and ordered him to leave the house at once and never enter it again.

"Better consider my offer," said the elder, with a leer.

"Leave the house at once!"

"I'll go this time, my pretty dear, but it will be to the church, where I will have you recorded as a convert and sealed to me for a wife. You do not understand the power of our church, but you shall find out. I have sworn that you shall be mine, and you cannot escape me. The power of the church will aid me to win you."

With this threat the elder turned and left the house. As soon as he was out of sight, Effie Ellis fell to the floor in a swoon, but she soon recovered and then came the full realization of her danger. She knew that Dudley was a scoundrel of the deepest dye, and would stop at nothing to accomplish his purpose.

Effie's first thought was of her lover. She would go to him for advice and aid. Her father came home a few hours after Dudley's departure, but she did not tell him what had occurred. She did not wish to alarm him, if she could help it.

Jack Webb's ranch was located near Rossville, twenty miles west of the Ellis ranch. Effie Ellis often went to Rossville alone to do her shopping, and sometimes remained there over night with some of her young lady friends.

An hour after Dick Dudley left the Ellis ranch, a message was flying over the wires to Jack Webb at Rossville. It read:

Meet me at depot, midnight train. Important. EFFIE.

Effie Ellis told her father that she was going to Rossville on the night train. She told him she had some shopping to do, and would go down that night and return early the following day. As she had made similar trips before, he thought nothing of it, and when he kissed her good-by, at the depot that night, he did not dream of the suffering that was in store for both of them before they met again.

Jack Webb received the telegram from his sweetheart in time, and was at the depot in Rossville to meet her. He could not imagine what the important business was, but he felt no uneasiness. He knew that Effie had been on the plains long enough to take care of herself under ordinary circumstances.

It was chance that threw Effie Ellis an easy victim into the hands of the dread Mormon bandit that night. He had no knowledge that she would be on the train.

The band of outlaws and robbers, of which Dick Dud-

ley was the secret leader, had been idle some time and they wanted a job. Some of them were out of money, and he had agreed to lead them in a train robbery. It was an easy matter to rob a train in that locality, and easy to escape detection, because the public at that time credited all the train robberies in the West to the James boys and their followers.

When the Mormon bandit recognized Effie Ellis among the passengers that night, he forgot his usual caution, he was so elated and made no further effort to conceal his identity. He realized that the girl was in his power, and determined at once that she should not escape him. He gave no further thought to the train robbery, and at once called off his men.

While the train sped on to the West, the Mormon bandit, with Effie Ellis held in front of him on his horse, galloped away toward the hills, followed by the remnant of his band. They did not wait to learn the fate of the three members of the band who were on the car with Dudley.

Jack Webb's heart sank when the conductor told him of the abduction of his sweetheart by Dick Dudley. No man in Utah knew the character of the Mormon elder better than Jack Webb. Several months before a lot of cattle had been stolen from him by cattle thieves, and in looking them up he had done a little very clever detective work. He had secured evidence enough to convince him that Dick Dudley was at the head of one of the worst bands of outlaws and robbers that ever existed in the West.

Webb made no attempt to secure the arrest and conviction of Dudley, because he knew it would be useless. He knew the power of the Mormon church, with its secret agents all over the territory, too well. His business interests, too, were among the Mormons, and he could not afford to incur their enmity. He did not dream of Dick Dudley's infatuation for Effie Ellis.

Jack Webb spoke the truth when he said there was only one man who could cope with Dick Dudley in Utah, and that man was Jesse James. It required a man of great cunning and daring to run down the Mormon bandit in the hills, where he was surrounded at all times by his band of followers, and had the terrible power of the Mormon church at his back.

The conductor had given the signal to go ahead, and Jack Webb had turned to leave the depot at Rossville, when the two strangers approached him, and one of them said, in a quiet tone:

"I am Jesse James."

"I never saw you before; how am I to know that you are Jesse James?" asked Webb.

"I will prove it," answered the stranger, quietly.

"How will you prove it?"

"You said, just now, that Jesse James was the only man that could cope with Dick Dudley, the Mormon bandit?"

"Yes."

"Well, what do you want done with Dudley?"

"He has carried off the woman I love, and if she is not rescued at once he will force her to become his wife, or worse."

"And you want the girl rescued?"

"Yes."

"Good; I will rescue her, and prove that I am Jesse James at the same time. I know Dick Dudley, and I have an old score to settle with him. Can I depend on you not to betray my identity, if I convince you that I am Jesse James?"

"You can. Here is my hand on it."

"Good! This is my brother Frank. We three will work together, and without other assistance. You want to rescue the girl you love; Frank and I have come to Utah to settle some old scores with Dick Dudley. Do you know his hiding-place?"

"Yes."

"Can you provide us with horses?"

"The best in Utah."

"And you will guide us to his hiding place?"

"I shall start at once on his trail, and I do not intend to leave it until Effie Ellis is out of his power, and if he has harmed a hair of her head his life shall pay for it."

"We will go with you, and there is no time to lose."

The three men hurried away to Jack Webb's ranch, and two hours before dawn they were riding toward the hills where the hiding-place of the Mormon bandit was located.

The home of Dick Dudley was a big stone house that had the appearance of a castle. It was situated on a hill, and could be approached from only two directions. Windows in the house commanded both approaches. A small band of well-armed men could hold the house against an army.

Late in the afternoon of the day following the abduction of Effie Ellis three horsemen approached the stronghold of the great Mormon bandit. The three men were Jack Webb, Jesse and Frank James.

They approached the house very cautiously to guard against an ambush. Their horses were left in a wooded valley some distance away, and they crept up on foot.

Jack Webb was confident they would find Effie Ellis a prisoner in the house, and he was not a little surprised that they met with no resistance and found no sentries on guard.

They reached the front door of the house, and were greatly surprised when Dudley answered their knock in

person. He was clad in his robes as an elder of the church, and in his hand carried the book of Mormon.

Dudley did not recognize the two men who had cut short the career of three members of his band the night before.

He knew Jack Webb, and with a great show of hospitality, invited his visitors to enter.

"Where is Effie Ellis?" asked Webb, sternly.

"I do not know," answered Dudley.

"You lie; she is a prisoner in this house."

Dudley laughed.

"Indeed, you astonish me. It has been some time since I had the pleasure of seeing the young lady."

"You abducted her last night from a train that you and your outlaw band were robbing."

"My dear sir, that is a grave charge."

"It is true. I witnessed the robbery. Dick Dudley, you do not seem to recognize me, but you will soon enough. First release that young lady to her friend here, and then we will settle an old score."

The last speaker was Jesse James.

"My dear sir, who are you?" said the bandit, and he made a brave effort to appear surprised and keep up an appearance of innocence.

"My name is Jesse James. Do you recognize it?"

The face of Dick Dudley turned pale. He could no longer conceal the fact that he recognized all his visitors, but he had not yet played his last card, and he kept up a bold front.

Turning to Webb, the bandit said:

"You say there is a young lady, a prisoner in this house. You have my permission to search it. I will show you through every room."

"Lead the way, then, at once."

"Let me call a servant to bring lights."

Dudley placed a silver whistle to his lips, and blew a long, loud signal.

Several moments elapsed and no servant appeared. Jesse James grew suspicious. Webb, in his earnestness to find his sweetheart, did not think of danger. Jesse stepped to the door and looked out. A score of men armed with rifles had surrounded the house.

The signal on the whistle had not been intended for a servant.

Quick as lightning, Jesse James turned and drew a revolver.

"You treacherous cur, take that!" he exclaimed, and fired at Dudley, as the latter sprang through a door into an adjoining room, just in time to escape the bullet that whistled past his head.

The shot warned Jack Webb and Frank James that something had happened.

"Out with your guns, boys, we have been caught like rats in a trap, and must fight our way out," cried Jesse.

Webb and Frank ran to the door and looked out. They had, indeed, been caught in a trap. The house was surrounded by the Mormon bandit's desperate band of outlaws and robbers.

The three men drew their revolvers. They would not die like rats in a trap if they had been caught.

To escape they must cut through the line of desperate men that surrounded the house.

Jesse James realized that it meant a fight to the death. There seemed to be little chance of escape.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

AT THE MERCY OF A MORMON BANDIT.

Effie Ellis struggled hard to free herself from the grasp of the Mormon bandit. She knew a terrible fate was in store for her if she fell into his power.

Her struggles were in vain.

She felt herself lifted on a horse in front of her captor, and then she lost consciousness. When her senses returned she could not tell how long she had been a prisoner, but she was still held firmly on the horse of the bandit chief, and they were riding at a rapid pace.

The fair prisoner heard the hoofbeats of other horses all around, and she knew that the outlaw's band was with him.

She did not cry out and made no effort to escape, as she fully realized that it would be useless, then, and might subject her to harsh treatment.

For hours the party of outlaws continued their journey to the north with their prisoner. The young lady was almost worn out with the fatigue of the journey, and the great mental strain, when at last they came to a halt in front of a long, low stone building. The place looked like a castle, and Effie Ellis correctly guessed that it was the home of the Mormon bandit.

Dick Dudley dismounted and lifted his prisoner to the ground. There was a clumsy attempt at tenderness in his manner, but in his eyes there was a wicked gleam of triumph.

Day was breaking in the east when the outlaws reached the home of their leader.

Effie Ellis saw that there were more than a score of rough-looking armed men in the party. They all dismounted, and led their horses away, one of them also taking the horse of Dudley.

The Mormon bandit led his prisoner into the house, and opened a door leading into a small, neatly-furnished room.

Early as the hour was there were signs of life about the house.

With an attempt at politeness, Dudley invited his pris-

oner to be seated, and told her he would send in refreshments at once.

He turned and left the room, locking the door behind him.

In five minutes the door opened and a woman past middle age entered with a tray bearing coffee and warm biscuit. She put the tray on a table in the center of the room, and told the prisoner to help herself.

Effie had by this time partly recovered from the excitement of her abduction, and, realizing the importance of keeping up her strength, she ate a biscuit and drank the cup of coffee.

The woman who had brought the food remained in the room. She watched the fair young prisoner closely. At last she asked:

"Are you sixteen?"

"Am I sixteen years old, is that what you mean?"

The woman laughed.

"No; I mean are you No. 16?"

"I do not understand you."

"Are you to be his wife?"

"Whose wife?"

"The elder's, of course."

"You mean Dick Dudley?"

"Yes."

"No; I will die rather than become the wife of that man."

Again the woman laughed.

"They all talk that way when they first come, but they get over it soon enough."

"I am a prisoner here. I was abducted last night. You are a woman; I am sure you will help me to escape."

"We are all prisoners here."

"Are you his wife?"

"One of them; I am No. 4. He does not care for me now, the others are all younger. I am only a servant for the favorite ones. You will be the favorite for a while, until he tires of you, and the others will be neglected. Some of them may be jealous of you. Wives are strange creatures when there are so many of them to one husband."

Effie Ellis could not repress a shudder of horror, as the woman's talk gave her an insight into what was in store for her unless she could manage in some way to escape, or to let her father and sweetheart know where she was, so they could come to her rescue.

"How many wives has this man?"

"Fifteen."

"Can I send a message to my father?"

"Not unless the elder is willing."

"But I will not be kept a prisoner here. The law will protect me."

"Don't indulge in any false hopes. You do not know

the power of this man, nor the power of the Mormon church. The elders have no fear of the laws in Utah."

"But Dick Dudley will not dare to keep me a prisoner here."

"He has kept many others prisoners, and he has done more. He has——"

The sentence was cut short. The door opened and the Mormon bandit entered.

Wife No. 4 took up the tray and left the room, leaving Effie alone with her captor.

"My pretty dear, I hope you will soon feel quite at home here," said Dudley, advancing toward his prisoner.

Effie shrank from him in terror, and did not answer.

"Shall I send for an elder and have our wedding take place to-day, or do you prefer to wait until to-morrow?"

"What do you mean?"

"That you are to be my wife, of course."

"You have many wives already."

"Not as many as I am entitled to under the laws of the church, and none so pretty as you."

"Why do you keep me a prisoner here?"

"You are to be my wife."

"Never! I will die first."

The big, burly bandit laughed a coarse, brutal laugh at this threat, and attempted to put his arms about his prisoner, but she sprang out of his reach.

"I'll give you until to-morrow to think it over, and by that time you may change your mind."

With these words, Dudley turned and left the room again, locking the door behind him.

A few minutes later wife No. 4 came in, and said:

"Come with me; I am to show you to your room."

Effie Ellis arose, and followed the woman, who led the way down a long, narrow hall, then up a winding stairway to a small room on the second floor. The room contained a cot and one chair. There were no other articles of furniture. There was only one small window, and that was secured by strong iron bars. The room was really a prison cell, strong enough to hold a much more desperate prisoner than Effie Ellis.

"This will be your room until you marry the elder," said the woman, and, without another word, she turned and went out, locking the door behind her.

Effie Ellis was a brave young girl, but as she tried the heavy door and looked at the iron bars across the window, the complete helplessness of her position dawned upon her, and she sank upon the cot and burst into a flood of tears. Her father and lover would know nothing of her fate, perhaps, and would not know where to look for her, unless she could send them a message, which seemed impossible.

Tears made her strong and brave again, and soon Effie

wiped her eyes and began to think of means of escape from her prison.

She examined every nook and corner of the room, tried the lock of the door and the bars on the window time and again, but she could not move them; there was, indeed, no escape, it seemed.

She could not see the sun as the day wore on, and had no means of knowing what the hour was.

At last the door opened, and a woman older and more repulsive looking than the first one, came in with a tray of food, placed it on the floor, and went out without a word.

An hour later a key turned in the lock, the door opened softly, and a young woman entered the room. She was handsome, but in her black eyes there was a look of mingled fear and desperation.

"Speak in whispers, we may be watched," said the newcomer, as she closed the door softly, and locked it on the inside.

"Number four told me about you. I am No. 15, and the favorite. I was abducted as you have been, and am held a prisoner. If he makes you his wife, then I become a servant. I hate him. I have tried to escape and failed. I will try again, and I will help you. We will escape together."

"Heaven bless you!"

"Don't thank me yet; we have not escaped."

"Can we get away?"

"We will try, but first I must kill him."

"You would not commit murder?"

"Dick Dudley has worse than murdered me. I have sworn to kill him. It will be a poor revenge, but it is the best I can do."

"Let him live; he will be punished in time."

"Ah, you do not know what it is to be shut up in a Mormon harem, to be the victim of a Mormon elder's brutal lust. You do not know what is in store for you, if you remain here."

Effie Ellis shuddered. She saw the woman was desperately in earnest.

"What is your name?"

"My name was Lena Burton. I have no name now; I am simply No. 15. Mormon wives are numbered—they have no names."

"When can we escape?"

"I do not know. Perhaps we cannot escape; we must wait and watch. Death will be the penalty, if we attempt it and fail."

"How long have you been here?"

"Six months. It seems as many years."

The conversation was suddenly interrupted by the sound of a pistol-shot, which rang through the building, followed by the sound of hurrying footsteps.

"My God, they have discovered my plan!" cried Lena Burton. "This way, quick, we must fly at once. It is death to remain here."

She opened the door of the cell-like room and dragged Effie Ellis out into the hall. Then she ran into another room, and came back in a moment with two pistols.

"Take one of these; we may have to fight for our lives, and if there is no escape, you may prefer death to dishonor."

Another pistol-shot rang out, as the two women ran down the long, dark hall.

At the head of the stairs they paused a moment and listened. All was silent below.

They hurried down the stairs, and Lena Burton led the way along the lower hall toward a door.

They had gone less than a dozen steps, when both stopped suddenly, and gave a slight scream of terror.

The two women suddenly found themselves face to face with Dick Dudley.

The big bandit barred the way to liberty.

Their escape was cut off.

CHAPTER LXXX.

AN OLD SCORE TO SETTLE.

Dick Dudley, the Mormon bandit, feared only one man living. That man was Jesse James. He had good reason to fear him.

Dudley did not recognize the two men who had shot three members of his band, while they were robbing the Union Pacific express train. At that time he did not dream that Jesse James was within five hundred miles of Utah.

The Mormon bandit was seldom pursued after his robbing expeditions. His name carried terror with it throughout Northern Utah, and there was no sheriff bold enough to follow him to his stronghold in the hills.

While he had never been attacked at his home, he was always prepared for one, and it would have been impossible to have taken him by surprise at any time.

The day after the abduction of Effie Ellis, Dudley took extra precautions to prevent the rescue of his prisoner. He knew that as soon as her father and lover learned what had happened they would never rest until they had found her.

He was determined that she should be his wife before any one could come to her rescue.

Dudley was not much surprised when he saw three men approach his house the afternoon following the abduction, and recognized the leader of them as Jack Webb. The other two men he did not recognize until he heard the voice of Jesse James.

The big bandit smiled as he saw the three men coming.

He could guess their mission, and he was ready to receive them.

His followers were concealed near the house, and they had been instructed what to do in case they received a certain signal.

Dudley's face turned pale, when he recognized the voice of Jesse James, but he tried hard not to show by his manner that he had ever seen the man before.

The Mormon bandit realized that this was no chance meeting. Several years before Jesse James had sworn to hunt him down, and when they met one or the other must die.

Dudley was face to face with a man who was more than a match for him in cunning and daring, and that man was his mortal foe. Jesse James was his superior in the skill of handling a revolver. In a duel at sight, Dudley knew that he would have little chance for his life. He must in some way outwit his enemy, and take him at a disadvantage.

This in part was the reason of the Mormon's suave manner to his unwelcome visitors.

Several years before the time of this story, Dick Dudley and Jesse James had known each other in Missouri. They were never friends, for the reason that Dudley was a crafty, cunning scoundrel, who would stoop to any means to accomplish his ends, while James was a dangerous, brave young fellow, who would scorn to do a dishonorable act. He always kept his word with friend and foe.

Jesse James had loved Lena Burton, and she had promised to be his wife. Dick Dudley had proposed to her, and was refused. This made him furious. He left the State and went to Utah, where he joined the Mormons, and soon became an elder. He turned highwayman, and was soon very wealthy. But he did not forget the girl who had scorned him. He was planning a terrible revenge, and he had sworn that she should yet be his wife.

Before the time fixed for his marriage to Lena Burton, Jesse James was forced to leave his home, and go in hiding from the swarms of detectives who were on his trail.

Through all his exciting adventures the girl he loved remained true to him. Many times she saved him from capture, or death, by giving him information of the movements of the officers who were hunting for him.

One day Jesse received a visit from Dick Dudley. The latter told something of his career in Utah, and wanted to join the famous outlaw's band. Jesse was suspicious of him, but at last agreed to take him along on one expedition and give him a trial.

That was all Dudley wanted. He was in the pay of the detectives, and he only wanted an opportunity to betray his successful rival in love.

At the first chance Dudley left the hiding-place of the

band to report to the detectives his success. He was watched, and his designs were discovered. When he returned to the camp Jesse James and his men were miles away.

Angered by his failure to remove his rival from his path, Dudley resolved to abduct Lena Burton from her home, take her to his retreat in Utah, and force her to become his wife.

In this he succeeded by the aid of two young desperadoes, whom he had enlisted for his Mormon band.

When she found herself in the power of Dick Dudley and learned his intentions, as well as something of his career in the far West, Lena Burton knew there was but one man who could save her from a fate worse than death. That man was Jesse James.

Without being discovered by her captor, Lena managed to write a brief letter to her lover, informing him of her situation, and begging him to hasten to her rescue before it was too late.

She finally succeeded in getting the letter mailed before she reached Utah, and for a time she lived in hope.

The letter followed Jesse James from place to place, in his wanderings, and it was many months before he received it. When it finally fell into his hands the girl he loved was a helpless prisoner in the castle of the Mormon bandit, and a victim of his brutal passion.

When he had read the letter, Jesse James held it aloft in his right hand, and then and there swore a terrible oath to hunt down Dick Dudley and kill him.

That was the mission that had brought him to Utah. The night of the train robbery, he failed to recognize Dudley in time, on account of the mask worn by the bandit, but it was something to know that he was near the man he was hunting.

The shrill whistle sounded by the Mormon bandit was the signal to his band of armed men, and they answered it promptly.

The three men were in his power now, he thought, and he was determined they should not escape. It was a good chance to rid himself of his most dangerous enemy forever.

Dudley had suspected that Jesse James might try to shoot him down when he realized that he was caught in a trap. The big bandit stood close to a door opening into the hall, and when he blew the signal to his men, he sprang through it in a moment.

He was none too soon. A bullet from the pistol of Jesse whistled close to his head.

A second shot went through the door, but that, too, missed the bandit.

"Don't lose sight of him, it is our only chance of escape," shouted Frank James, as he saw Dudley disappear through the door.

The three men sprang to the door. Dudley had locked it behind him, but all three of them threw their weight against it and broke it down.

Dudley was running down the hall.

"Don't shoot him!" cried Frank, as Jesse raised his revolver. "We must get him in our power, and make his life the price of our liberty. It is our only chance of getting out of here alive."

At once Jesse and Jack Webb realized that Frank was right, and the three men hurried forward to get their hands on the big bandit before he could reach some mysterious passage in the big house and get away from them.

They were only a few feet behind him when he came face to face with Lena Burton and Effie Ellis, who were trying to escape from the gloomy prison.

The sudden discovery of the unexpected attempt of his prisoners to escape caused Dudley to stop. In another moment he would have been in the hands of the men who were close behind him.

Lena Burton saw the face of the man just behind Dudley, and recognized it at once.

Her joy knew no bounds.

"Jesse! Jesse! have you come to save me at last?" she cried.

For a moment Dick Dudley was forgotten.

Jesse James recognized his long-lost sweetheart. In the trembling girl at her side Jack Webb recognized Effie Ellis.

Dick Dudley took advantage of the interruption to make his escape out of range of the deadly revolver of his enemy. He sprang up the stairway, and was out of sight in a moment.

But the danger that surrounded Jesse and the others was too serious to be long forgotten.

They were all prisoners now, and practically at the mercy of the Mormon bandit. They must find a way to escape from the house, and there was no time to lose.

"There is a secret passage leading to the rear of the house," said Lena Burton, when she learned that the front was guarded by the followers of the bandit chief.

"You may be able to escape that way; I will show it to you."

"You are going to escape with us, and can guide us through the passage," said Jesse.

"No, I cannot leave here yet. I will show you a way of escape, but I must remain behind."

"Why must you remain behind?"

"Dick Dudley still lives."

"You do not mean that you have learned to care for that man?"

"No no! not that. I have sworn to kill him. I will not leave here until he is dead. It is a poor revenge for all I have suffered, but I must see him dead at my feet."

A strange light came into the flashing black eyes of Lena Burton, and her lips grew pale.

"I, too, have sworn to kill that man," said Jesse. "Come, let us get out of this. The advantage is all on his side while we remain here. We must escape from this house, and then we will meet Dick Dudley where our chances will be equal. I may not let you kill him, but I promise that you shall see him dead at your feet."

Jesse James took Lena by the arm and led her along the hall toward the entrance to the secret passageway.

It was quite dark by this time. The lamps in the house had not been lighted, and the little party, guided by Lena, were compelled to grope their way along slowly and carefully.

At the end of the hall they went down a short, narrow flight of steps into a small basement. Two doors opened out of this room. One of them was the entrance to the secret passage that led under the walls of the house, and came out some distance in the rear.

While Lena was groping about in the dark to find the door, an old woman, with a repulsive-looking face, who was known as wife number two, came to the head of the stairs with a lantern.

"Are you looking for the door to the secret passage?" she asked.

"Yes."

"It is the door on the right. I wish I could escape with you."

Lena opened the door on the right, and the little party entered in single file. They walked slowly forward a short distance through most intense darkness.

Then a faint light was seen in front. They moved slowly forward a few steps, and the light in front grew more distinct. They seemed to be approaching a well-lighted room.

Lena Burton suddenly stopped and looked anxiously ahead for a moment. Then she suddenly clasped her hands with a gesture of despair.

"My God! we are lost! We are in the wrong passage. This leads to the cave, the chamber of horrors, and it is always strongly guarded."

Wife No. 2 had been true to her bandit husband.

She had directed Lena Burton to the wrong door.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

SAVED BY A BULLET.

Lena Burton learned of the secret exit from the castle of the Mormon bandit soon after she was brought there a prisoner.

Twice before she had tried to escape that way. The first time she reached the end of the passage in safety, only to be met there and driven back by one of the members of the robber band who was on guard.

The second time she entered the passage to the cave by mistake, and reached the entrance to the cave without being discovered. There she witnessed a sight she never forgot. A member of Dudley's band was being tortured to death. He had turned traitor, and had been condemned to death by being roasted over a slow fire.

This horrible sentence was being carried out when Lena Burton reached the entrance to the cave. She was glued to the spot by the horror of the scene, and stood there watching the man slowly burning to death for several moments before she had strength to turn and make her way back through the dark passage to the house.

Standing over the dying man, and grinning with fiendish delight, was Dick Dudley.

She had never spoken to any one of what she discovered that day, but to her the cave was a chamber of horrors from that time forward.

Lena lost all hope of escape when she saw that they had entered the wrong passage, and the only exit to the open air was through the cave of torture.

She turned and led the way back along the dark, narrow passage toward the basement where they had entered. They might be in time to find the other passage before their attempt at flight was discovered.

The little party reached the door at last, only to find that it had been locked on the other side since they entered and retreat was cut off.

"My God! what shall we do?" cried Lena, in wild alarm.

"Follow me," said Jesse James, quietly. "I am tired of running and dodging from a cur like Dick Dudley. I am going to fight our way out of here. We will go through the chamber of horrors and anything else that gets in our way."

As Jesse spoke he faced about, and, drawing his revolvers, told the little party to follow him.

Jack Webb and Frank James also drew their revolvers. Webb took his position just behind Jesse, the two girls were placed in the middle, and Frank James brought up the rear.

In this position the little party marched in single file back through the dark passageway to the cave.

They reached the cave in safety, and, to their surprise, there was no one there to oppose their exit.

But when the little party entered the dimly-lighted cave, and looked about them, a sight met their gaze that made even Jesse James shudder.

Suspended from the stone ceiling of the cave hung five human skeletons. They told a horrible story of Dick Dudley's penalty for those who dared to betray the secrets of his life.

Five men had been tortured to death in the cave, and their skeletons hung there, as a terrible warning to other

members of the band who might be disposed to turn traitor at any time.

It was, indeed, a chamber of horrors.

"We have no time to waste here. We must get out of this. Dick Dudley would hang our skeletons in his cave if he had the chance," said Jesse James, as he led the way toward the one narrow exit that led toward the open air.

They reached the mouth of the cave in safety, and all drew a long breath of relief as they glanced about them.

The cave was at the head of a narrow ravine, and there was only one approach to the entrance.

This was a narrow footpath winding around huge boulders and walled in on both sides by the steep rocky banks of the ravine that rose in places to a height of one hundred feet.

A score of well-armed men could hold such a position against an army.

The little party did not pause long to admire the stronghold of the bandit. They started down the narrow pathway, still in single file, and advanced slowly and cautiously.

"Stop there, and throw up your hands!"

Jesse James and his friends had advanced less than one hundred feet, when a man who looked like a Mexican or a half-breed stepped from behind a boulder, and thus ordered them to stop.

The man held a repeating rifle in his hands. As he gave the order to stop, he attempted to raise the rifle to his shoulder.

A loud report rang out, awakening a thousand echoes in the stone-walled ravine, and the bandit with the rifle sank to the ground dead.

He was not quick enough for Jesse James.

"There's one Mormon less to fight," said Jesse, as he slipped a cartridge into his revolver and moved on.

A few steps farther and another member of the band of Mormon bandits appeared at the edge of the cliff overhead.

Jack Webb was watching the cliff, and at once raised his pistol to fire. But he was not quick enough.

The man sprang back, and was out of sight.

Then several shrill whistles were heard in quick succession. They were signals of some kind, and the three men down in the ravine walked cautiously now, with cocked revolvers, and their eyes and ears wide open.

They expected to fight their way out, and it would be a fight to the death. To fall into the hands of Dick Dudley meant death for the three men, and worse than death for the two women.

The little party had advanced safely, fully one hundred yards from the mouth of the cave, and had reached a

point where the cliffs on either side were not more than sixty feet high.

Suddenly Jack Webb, who was still watching the cliffs saw a face peer over the top for a moment. It was withdrawn before he could get a shot at it.

They had gone only a few feet farther when they heard a peculiar whirring noise in the air, a long, dark line was dropped over the cliff, circled in the air for one brief instant, and then, before any one in the party realized what it meant, the noose of a long lasso settled in a graceful coil about Lena Burton's waist.

Before her friends could raise a hand to help her—in fact before they fully realized what had happened, there was a quick, strong pull on the rope, and she was drawn up twenty feet at a single jerk.

She screamed for help, but there was no way to help her.

The men who held the rope and were drawing her up were out of sight back from the brink of the cliff.

Even if they let go now, it would be almost certain death to fall to the rocks below.

Two or three more quick pulls on the rope and Lena Burton was drawn up and lifted to the brink of the cliff.

She was again in the power of the Mormon bandit, and her friends had stood by and witnessed her capture, while they were powerless to aid her.

Jesse James said little, but his face grew white with passion. Another mark had been added to the score he had to settle with Dick Dudley.

Never before had Jesse James been so baffled, and his only thought now was to find Dick Dudley, kill him first, and then rescue Lena Burton again.

Once more the little party in the ravine moved forward, with greater caution this time than before.

They had to guard against enemies above, in front, and possibly in their rear.

They scattered out a little, and walked some ten feet apart.

Another fifty feet had been passed in safety, when they heard again the whirl of a flying lasso, and, quick as a flash, the rope settled about the waist of Effie Ellis.

A quick pull from above, and she was ten feet in the air.

Again a pistol shot rang out, and the bullet, true to its aim, cut the rope that held Effie Ellis suspended in the air.

Jack Webb had fired the shot that saved his sweetheart from again falling into the hands of the Mormon bandit. The idea of shooting the rope in two had come to him as an inspiration. He fired quick, and his aim was true.

As Effie fell, Webb sprang forward and caught her in his arms.

Jesse James took in the clever work of Webb at a glance. He uttered only one word; that was "Good!"

Jesse was thinking then and not talking.

Effie Ellis was unhurt by the fall or the lasso, and the party pushed forward again.

Once more the man with the lasso came to the brink of the cliff and attempted to throw it. This time he was too slow. As he leaned over to make the throw, a bullet from Frank James' revolver pierced his brain, and he tumbled headlong to the bottom of the ravine, dragging his terrible rope down with him.

This dangerous enemy out of the way, the little party hurried on, and soon reached the open prairie a mile from the home of Dick Dudley.

They looked about them, but none of the band of Mormon bandits was in sight.

"We must find our horses at once," said Jesse, and they began to make their way around to the thicket where their animals were tied.

They reached their horses without meeting any other members of the band of outlaws. They mounted at once, Jack Webb taking Effie Ellis on his horse in front of him.

They rode out of the bushes and up to the summit of a hill from which they could obtain a good view of the house of Dick Dudley. From the rising ground they could see the band of outlaws running in all directions, and returning in a few moments mounted on their mustangs and carrying their repeating rifles.

Those already mounted were scattering out in all directions.

"We must fight and race for it both this time," said Jesse, with a smile. He was happy at the prospect of a fight.

"Better be going with the girl," he said to Webb.

They all turned to ride away. The outlaws, circling about on their ponies threatened to surround them.

Just as they turned to ride away, Jesse caught sight of Dick Dudley mounted on a large, black horse, giving orders to his men.

"Go, now! Ride for your lives!" shouted Jesse, to Jack Webb.

"Cover the rear, Frank; I am going to have one shot at Dudley, and then I will overtake you."

"Don't risk it now!" shouted Frank, but Jesse did not heed him. He had put spurs to his horse, and was riding straight toward the Mormon bandit, who was then surrounded by a half-score of his men.

If he could get in pistol range the Mormon's career would soon be ended.

As Frank James galloped away to join Jack Webb, he looked back at Jesse, who was riding toward the big bandit, taking desperate chances for a shot at him.

Suddenly a cowboy on a mustang, with a long rope in

his hand, rode out of a bunch of sage brush, close behind Jesse, and started after him at full gallop, circling his lasso about his head as he rode.

Frank realized the danger, and shouted a warning to Jesse, but it was too late.

The long rope, hurled through the air with great force, settled around Jesse James before he was aware that there was an enemy behind him, and pinioned his arm to his side.

The trained mustang of the bandit then stopped suddenly, bracing himself with his forefeet, and Jesse James, a prisoner for the first time in his life, was jerked from his horse with great violence.

Frank turned to go to his rescue, but a volley from the rifles of four of the bandits who had discovered him warned him that it would be useless.

Turning his horse about, he again started after Jack Webb. A score of the Mormon bandit's band were now in pursuit. It was to be a race for life.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

DOOMED TO DEATH BY THE SAINTS.

When he heard the swish of the lasso, as it settled down over his arms, Jesse James had his hand on his revolver.

As the rope tightened, he was jerked off his horse, and the weapon fell out of his hand.

In a moment he lay on the ground a helpless prisoner and unarmed. He was caught dead to rights for the first time in his life, and ground his teeth in rage.

He was a prisoner, and to be helpless in the hands of Dick Dudley meant death.

Jesse struggled to his feet, and turned to face the man who had thrown the rope. The bandit had dismounted, and was advancing, but he kept the rope drawn tightly, and, struggle as he would, Jesse could not free his arms.

The man who had thrown the rope with such perfect aim was smiling with satisfaction as he came up. Jesse glanced at him and saw he was a Mexican, a tall, powerful fellow, with a most villainous face.

As the big Mexican grinned with satisfaction at his good throw, his face looked like that of a demon.

"Ha! ha! me foola you dat time."

"Curse you, I'll put a bullet through your heart for that."

"No shoot now," and the Mexican gave the rope a pull and drew it so tight Jesse winced with pain.

"Who are you?"

"Dey calla me Lasso Pete."

"What do you want with me?"

"De Senor Dudley wanta you. He give money," and again the Mexican's face spread out into a hideous grin.

Jesse James realized that there was no use talking to his captor. Dudley had, no doubt, offered a big reward to the man who captured him alive. He was a prisoner, and his only chance of escape was to outwit his captors.

Lasso Pete picked up Jesse's revolver, and put it in his own pocket. Then he remounted his pony and called to his captive to come on.

Jesse could do nothing but obey. The lasso was still so tightly drawn about his arms that he could not move them. As long as the Mexican held it tight Jesse was powerless to defend himself. He could walk, but his arms were helpless.

Dick Dudley was not more than one hundred yards away when Jesse was captured, and had witnessed the splendid throw of the Mexican. But when Jesse James arose and looked about him, after being pulled off his horse, the Mormon bandit was nowhere to be seen.

When Lasso Pete started off with his prisoner, he led the way directly toward the home of Dick Dudley.

Jesse James walked along in silence. He was trying to devise some plan of escape. He knew that Frank and Jack Webb would come to his rescue as soon as possible, but they might be too late.

Arriving at the Mormon bandit's house, they were met at the door by Dudley, who could not repress a smile of satisfaction at the capture, but it was plain that the escape of Effie Ellis had made him furious.

"Glad to see you back," said Dudley.

Jesse made no reply.

"Where are your friends?"

"Safely out of your power."

"Don't be too sure of that. They must leave Utah to be out of reach of my power."

"You won't trouble them any more."

"What do you mean?"

"That I intend to kill you."

"Indeed! When?"

"At the first opportunity."

"Jesse James, you will never find the opportunity. Your days are numbered. You came to Utah to settle an old grudge against me. I have one against you, and now I have you in my power. If you had been content to hunt me down for the old affair in Missouri I might give you a chance for your life, but the first thing you do when you get to Utah is to join issue with my enemies and try to rob me of a woman who has been sealed to me by the church for a wife. I ought to shoot you down like a dog, but I won't. You are a spy, and I will turn you over to the council of the saints. They shall give you a trial, and deal with you as you deserve."

"All that talk is wasted on me. Dick Dudley, you are a coward, and you dare not meet me in a fair fight."

"I am not a fighting man. I am an elder in the church, and it is my duty to set a good example."

"I discovered that you were not a fighting man the night you attempted to rob the train and carried off the girl. While I shot down three of your men you held the girl in front of you, as a shield to protect your carcass, and sneaked away like the cowardly cur that you are."

Dick Dudley's face turned white with passion. No other man living could have talked to him that way and survive.

Jesse James had an object in view in talking to the Mormon bandit as he did. The Mexican had removed the lasso from around his arms. He was without a weapon of any kind, but he was trying to provoke Dick Dudley to attack him. He was sure the Mormon intended to have him put to death, and a fight now meant a chance for his life.

Dick Dudley seemed to understand the object of his prisoner in trying to provoke him, and would not be drawn into a quarrel. He blew his whistle, and in a moment a dozen members of his band appeared and surrounded Jesse James.

"Take him away to the dungeon and see that he is well guarded. He is a spy who seeks to destroy the church, and the council of the saints must deal with him."

At the command of their leader, the men took hold of Jesse and carried him down a hallway, then down a short, winding stairway and through a long, dark passage. When they reached the light again, Jesse at once recognized the place. He was again in the cave, the chamber of horrors.

There was a cave within a cave in the chamber of horrors. At the back end of the main cave there was a small opening that led to a much smaller and darker room. The entrance to this small room was barely large enough for a man to crawl through, and, when it was closed, the little room was entirely dark.

Into this small room Jesse James was hustled by the outlaws, and, as they closed the opening, they warned him that he would be shot if he made any attempt to escape.

When the opening was closed, the first thing Jesse did was to feel around him to ascertain the size of the prison in which he was confined. He found that he had just enough room to stand erect and to turn around. Outside in the main cave he could hear the regular tramp of a sentry, and he knew that his cell was guarded. It would be folly to make any attempt at escape at that time.

He would have to wait and watch for a better chance.

In the dark cave, where Jesse James was a prisoner, it was impossible to tell day from night, but he knew he had been a prisoner only a few hours when the door was opened, and he was ordered to come out. When he reached the outer cave he saw that it was near sundown.

A dozen well-armed men were standing around, and a woman with a tray of food was there. She put down the tray, and Jesse was ordered to eat, which he did with a relish.

By the time he had finished his supper it was dark, and he was led from the cave by the guards, one-half of them walking in front, and the others behind him. Through the same dark passage they went back to the castle of Dick Dudley.

The guards with their prisoner passed through to the front of the house. In a front room they found blankets and food packed in bundles for them. They took up the bundles, and each one of the bandits took up a repeating rifle and fastened it about his shoulders by a belt.

It was evident that they were to go on a long journey.

The prisoner was ordered to take one of the bundles of food and a blanket, and he obeyed without a word.

Outside the house the party found horses already saddled, and, mounting, they rode away to the west. Dick Dudley was not in the party. He had not been seen while they were getting ready to start.

The members of the Mormon band of bandits formed in a hollow square about Jesse James as they rode off. After they had gone only a short distance, they seemed to suddenly grow suspicious that he would try to escape, and, dismounting, they bound his feet together under his horse securely.

All night the little party traveled at a good pace. Few words were spoken by any one, and the prisoner was unable to learn from the conversation of his guards where they were going, or the object of the trip.

When morning came, the party camped in a small grove on the bank of a stream. After breakfast, and feeding the horses, the prisoner was told to go to sleep, as they would be in camp all day. One-half the guards kept watch, while the other half slept.

Jesse James slept little that day. He was watching for a chance to escape, or to make a fight for his life, but none offered.

When night came again, the journey was at once resumed, and again they traveled all night.

Soon after daylight the following morning the party came in sight of a town of considerable size.

"What place is that?" asked Jesse.

"Salt Lake City," answered one of the guards.

Jesse James was being taken a prisoner to the citadel of Mormonism. He remembered Dick Dudley's threat that he would turn his enemy over to the saints as a spy.

Jesse James could now understand why Dick Dudley had not killed him at the first opportunity.

The little party rode boldly into the city. They knew they had nothing to fear there. Any man who was a friend of Dick Dudley was safe in Salt Lake City.

Down the principal streets of the town the bandits carried their prisoner, until they reached the gray stone building that served as a prison for the Mormon church. It was in this building that members of the church who were suspected of betraying its secrets were confined while awaiting trial, and there the condemned ones were put to death. Spies and informers of all kinds were tried and executed inside the gloomy old building. No man who dared to betray the secrets of Mormonism was allowed to live if he ever fell into the hands of the elders.

Reaching the prison gate, the bandits dismounted and knocked. In a moment the gate was opened, and two men in the garb of Mormon elders appeared.

"A spy captured by Elder Dudley. He is to be held for trial by the saints," said the bandits, pointing to Jesse James.

"Good! He shall be held, and the saints will try him to-morrow," answered one of the elders, and, taking Jesse by the arm, he led the way inside the prison.

When Jesse James heard the heavy gate close behind him, and saw it locked and barred, he began to realize that he was in the closest place he was ever in in his life, and he began to wonder how he was going to get out of it. He was confident it was all a plan of his enemy, Dudley, to get safely rid of him forever, and he would be given little chance of escape.

One of the elders conducted Jesse to a cell and locked him in. In a short time he returned with a splendid breakfast, which the prisoner greatly enjoyed.

Jesse James spent the day and night in the cell of the Mormon prison, seeing no one except the elder who brought his meals.

He carefully examined the walls and door of his cell, and found both secure. There was no chance of escape from the cell.

The following morning, soon after breakfast, Jesse was conducted from his cell to the courtroom, where the inner circle of Mormon saints meet to condemn to death those who have been false to the church, or have attempted to betray its secrets.

Five elders, clad in their robes of office, sat on a small raised platform at one end of the room.

"Who accuses the prisoner, and what is his crime?" asked one of the elders.

"I accuse him. He is a spy," said Dick Dudley, stepping forward.

It was just as Jesse suspected. This was all a trick of Dick Dudley to get him safely out of the way. But Jesse James was not dead yet, and he was not going to die without a fight.

The Mormon bandit advanced to the platform, and stood facing the elders, to tell them his story of the spy he had captured. His back was toward the prisoner.

The opportunity Jesse James had been waiting for had come.

Around Dick Dudley's waist there was a big leather belt, and in a scabbard at each side he carried a revolver.

As the big bandit talked to the saints, the butts of his revolvers protruded from the scabbards.

Quick as a flash Jesse James sprang forward and grasped the pistols of the bandit. Before the latter could make a move, he was disarmed.

When he turned around he looked into the muzzles of his own pistols pointed at his head.

It did not matter to Jesse James that he was in a Mormon prison, in the heart of Salt Lake City, and surrounded by thousands of men who would do the bidding of the Mormon bandit. He was himself again. With trusty weapons in his hands, Jesse James was not afraid to meet every follower of Brigham Young in an open combat.

Dick Dudley's face was a study, when he found himself disarmed by his prisoner, but his nerve came back in a moment.

"Put down my pistols."

Jesse James only smiled.

"You will be killed at once, if you attempt any resistance here."

"You will die first, if I am."

"What do you mean?"

"That I am to get out of here safely, or I will shoot you dead where you stand."

Dick Dudley turned pale. He knew he had a desperate man to deal with. By a slight motion of his eyes, he signaled to one of the men who had brought Jesse into the room.

The signal was seen and understood by Jesse as well as the man for whom it was intended. He turned quickly, and not a moment too soon. With a drawn knife, the man behind him was stealthily approaching.

There was a flash, a loud report, and Jesse James had one Mormon less to fight. He turned again to Dudley.

"Do I get out of here?" he asked.

"On one condition."

"Name it."

"That you agree to return Effie Ellis to me, and to leave Utah at once, never to return."

"I refuse."

"Then you cannot escape."

"I will get out of here, and you shall be my guide. Lead the way."

As Jesse James spoke he placed one of the pistols he had taken from the bandit against the latter's head. Dick Dudley could only obey. He knew it would be death to refuse then.

Jesse James had no idea of the exits of the big stone building, where he had been a prisoner for twenty-four hours, so he followed Dudley without a word. But he soon became suspicious when his guide led the way down a dark hallway, and a winding-stair, to a basement. There he opened a small door, and, turning to Jesse, said:

"That will lead you to the street."

Jesse James did not advance. He was too cunning to be caught in a trap so easily.

Glancing inside the room, he saw a sight that made him shudder. Ranged around the walls of the room on all sides he saw a score or more of human skeletons, and on the breast of each one was a placard bearing the word "Traitor."

Failing in his plan to trap Jesse in the chamber of horrors, Dick Dudley suddenly resolved to take desperate chances of making him a prisoner again. He suddenly sprang forward, intending to seize Jesse, and, by superior strength, overpower him.

The big bandit was not quick enough. As he leaped forward there was a flash and report, and a moment later Dick Dudley lay on the floor with blood trickling from a bullet-hole in his head.

He had been too slow for Jesse James.

Another enemy was out of the way, but the alarm had been sounded, and Jesse realized that there was not a moment to lose. He must get out of there at once.

Back up the stairway and the dark hall, Jesse James ran without waiting to see the effect of his shot on Dick Dudley. He turned to the right, sprang through a half-opened door, and found himself in the prison-yard, near the gate through which he had entered.

One of the elders was there trying to secure the fastenings.

"Open that gate at once," shouted Jesse, and, seeing the command backed up by a revolver, the elder obeyed.

Jesse sprang through the gate, and stood on the main street of Salt Lake City a free man.

He walked slowly away, but kept a close watch for pursuit. He knew a desperate effort would be made to recapture him, but he seemed in no hurry to get out of the city.

The great outlaw's fighting blood was up, now, and he wanted to teach the murderous Mormons a lesson before he left.

The opportunity came without delay.

A block from the prison he met one of the men who had brought him there from Dick Dudley's ranch.

The Mormon drew his revolver, but, before he could raise it, he was shot down.

Before the sound of the shot had died away a score of men surrounded Jesse James. They seemed to spring from the ground. He started on a run, firing right and left, but before he had gone a block his ammunition was exhausted. Then the Mormons closed in on him, and in a moment he was overpowered, and once more made a prisoner.

Without a moment's delay he was hurried back to the prison and to the courtroom of the saints.

The saints were still trembling from the fright the daring prisoner had given them, but they held a hurried consultation, and then one of their number stepped forward to announce the verdict.

In a trembling voice, he said:

"Remove the prisoner to the inner chamber of punishment, and there let him be dealt with as the church provides. The sentence is death."

Two stalwart elders led the prisoner away to the inner chamber.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

THE ESCAPE OF EFFIE ELLIS.

The ride of Frank James and Jack Webb from the home of the Mormon bandit was a race for life for many miles.

The outlaws of Dudley's band had orders to let no one escape.

With his sweetheart, Effie Ellis, on his horse in front of him, Jack Webb could not use his rifle, and he had to trust to the speed and endurance of his horse for escape from the outlaws.

Frank James brought up the rear, and for five miles kept up a running battle with their pursuers, which finally caused them to give up the chase after five of their number had fallen, killed or wounded by the unerring shots from Frank's rifle.

The little party pushed on as rapidly as possible, and late in the afternoon reached the ranch of Jack Webb.

Several times during the ride Frank James had cast anxious glances behind. He expected Jesse to overtake them before they had gone a great distance, but as the day wore on and he did not appear, Frank began to feel uneasy.

Jack Webb, too, felt alarmed for the safety of his

friend, but Frank tried to laugh it off. He did not want to betray his own feelings, and did not want to alarm Miss Ellis.

Once when Effie asked about the man she had seen riding alone toward the house of Dick Dudley, Frank laughed and told her his brother had gone back to settle an old score with the bandit.

"But he will be killed by those terrible outlaws."

"No danger of that. He has been in too many close places to be caught by those fellows."

While Frank James had great confidence in Jesse's ability to take care of himself, under all circumstances, he began to feel decidedly uneasy when night came on and nothing had been seen or heard of him.

After supper at the ranch of Jack Webb, Miss Ellis said she must hasten home and relieve the terrible anxiety of her father, who would not rest until he learned what had happened to her.

Webb said he could not risk her going out alone. She might be captured by the Mormon bandits again.

Effie said she was not afraid, but she did not object to having her lover for an escort home. There was a train at nine o'clock, and the lovers boarded it.

Frank James was urged to accompany them, but he declined and said he would wait at the ranch for his brother, or ride out to meet him.

Jack Webb called up the superintendent of his ranch, and told him to supply Frank James with a fresh horse, or anything else he might want at any time. Then bidding Frank to make himself at home at the place as long as he cared to remain, they separated.

Frank James knew that Jesse was in trouble. He realized that it was a very foolish thing that Jesse had done, riding back and taking such desperate chances of getting a shot at his enemy, Dick Dudley.

Frank remembered the man with the lasso, and his skill in throwing it, and he feared that Jesse had been caught and disarmed. To be disarmed and helpless in the power of Dick Dudley would mean death.

As soon as he had rested a little, Frank asked for a fresh horse, and long before midnight he was riding back toward the home of the Mormon bandit.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

JESSE JAMES ESCAPES FROM THE CHAMBER OF DEATH.

Dick Dudley, the Mormon bandit, was not killed by the shot fired by Jesse James down in the basement of the temple of the Mormon saints.

It proved a fortunate thing for Jesse James that the bullet glanced along the side of the big bandit's skull, making only a flesh wound that simply rendered him unconscious for a short time.

In the excitement of recapturing the prisoner no one had thought to look for Dudley. It was not known that he had been shot by the daring prisoner.

As the prisoner was led away to the chamber of death, Dick Dudley regained consciousness, and getting up hurried up to the council-room. He presented a hideous spectacle, with his face covered with blood, but he was raving with passion. He would make short work of Jesse James, if he could get him in his power once more.

Learning that the prisoner had been caught, and was

then on his way to the death-chamber, Dudley started after him like a wild beast in pursuit of its prey.

"Stop there! Stop I say! I'll put that man to death!"

The elders in charge of the prisoner were in the act of unlocking the door leading to the secret death-chamber when they heard Dudley cry to them to stop.

The big bandit's voice was hoarse with passion.

He had drawn an ugly looking knife, with a long, keen blade, and was rushing forward with the intention of cutting down his enemy on the spot.

The unexpected interruption caused the four guards to turn their backs to the prisoner.

This was the opportunity that Jesse James was waiting for. His guards carried big pistols in their belts, and he was unarmed. The moment they turned their backs toward him, he reached forward and snatched two pistols from the belts of the nearest elders.

The death-chamber was on the second floor of the big stone building. The passageway through which they had come was blocked by the advance of Dudley. There was no escape that way.

Jesse James was thinking fast then, and he knew there was no time to lose.

The only way of exit seemed to be cut off. Three armed men besides the two he had just disarmed stood between him and liberty.

There was only one way of escape.

Close by where he stood there was a large glass window. How far it was to the ground below he could not tell, but desperate as the chance was it must be taken at once. He would leap through the window, and take chances of reaching the ground in safety.

It was certain death to remain where he was.

Already the two armed elders had reached for their pistols.

The weapons were never drawn.

Jesse James was desperate now. Two shots rang out at the same moment, and the two elders sank to the floor.

The desperate prisoner had not fired too high this time.

An instant after the shots there was a crash of breaking glass, and Jesse James had taken the desperate leap through the window.

"Don't let that man get away. A thousand dollars to the one who captures him," cried Dick Dudley.

The big bandit rushed to the window and looked out. The prisoner had disappeared. It was certain that he had not been hurt by the fall.

The window through which Jesse James had leaped opened over the yard of the temple. Back of the main building there were several smaller houses occupied by the saints and their numerous wives. The back yards of these houses connected with the yard of the temple, but every door leading to the street was locked and barred.

The prisoner could not escape from the grounds, the elders said, and, summoning all the men about the temple, the entire party, headed by Dudley, rushed out to the yard to find the man who had twice escaped from them.

He could not be found. Every nook and corner of the big yard was gone over, but the prisoner could not be found anywhere.

The gates were all locked. It seemed impossible that he could have escaped to the street, but in some mysterious way he had disappeared.

No one thought of searching the houses of the saints. He could not find a refuge there, if he tried.

At last the search was given up, and the saints and elders were forced to the conclusion that in some mysterious way the desperate prisoner had reached the street.

When Jesse James sprang through the window, he struck the ground square on his feet, and was unhurt. Without pausing a moment, he ran around to the rear of the big temple looking for an exit from the yard.

As he turned the corner of the building, he ran against a woman.

"Who are you?" cried the woman, in alarm, as she caught sight of the pistols which Jesse still held in his hands.

"I was a prisoner there, but I have escaped."

"From the death-chamber?"

"Yes."

"You have not yet escaped; you cannot get out of the yard."

"I will get out, and you shall help me. I don't want to be rude, but are you my friend or enemy?"

"Are you a Mormon?"

"No."

"Then I am your friend. Come this way quick, you have not a moment to lose. I will show you a hiding-place, but we must be quick, or we will be discovered."

"Who are you?"

"Only the wife of a saint, or rather his slave now, but I will help you to escape. You can trust me."

"Show me the way to the street."

"Not now. We should both be discovered. I will hide you until night, and then you can get away, and, perhaps, get out of the city. Had they condemned you to death?"

"Yes."

"For what offense?"

"None. Dick Dudley, the Mormon bandit, is my enemy. I fell into his hands by chance, and was turned over to the saints to be murdered, by his orders I have no doubt."

"It is fortunate that you escaped. Dick Dudley is a terrible enemy."

"Do you know him?"

"Alas, too well."

"Are you another of his victims?"

"Indirectly I am. My young sister fell into his hands, and he brought her to Utah. I came here in search of her, but could not find her for a long time. I married a man who had been kind to me, only to find when too late, that he was a Mormon elder, and already had ten wives."

"Have you ever found your sister?"

"Yes, I learned that she was still in the power of Dick Dudley, and I could do nothing for her. He is a man of great influence in the Mormon church."

"What is your sister's name?"

"Lena Burton."

"What?"

"Lena Burton. Do you know her?"

"It was to find her and to rescue her from the power of that scoundrel that I came to Utah."

"Who are you?"

"I am Jesse James."

"Thank God, that you have escaped. I know Lena will be saved now that you are free. I have heard what a brave man you are."

"I will save you, too, if I succeed in getting safely out of this infernal prison."

"No, no; you must not attempt it. You would only be killed or captured. Live and escape to rescue Lena. She is young yet, and was the favorite child of our mother. Save her; it does not matter about me."

While they had been talking, the woman led the way to one of the houses at the rear of the big yard. They hurried along, and reached the house without having been discovered.

They entered through the basement, and the woman led the way to a room on the top floor.

"You must hide here until night. No one will think of looking for you here, and to-night I will find a way to get you out to the street, and out of the city in safety."

Without a word, Jesse James entered the room. He trusted the woman fully. He remembered that Lena Burton had an older sister, and he knew the woman was not deceiving him. The door had scarcely closed on Jesse James, when a crowd of men, led by Dick Dudley, entered the yard. They looked everywhere for the escaped prisoner, but not a trace of him could be found.

Then the gates leading to the street were all examined. The locks had not been disturbed. The prisoner had not reached the street. That much was clear.

If he had not escaped, he must be hiding in one of the houses of the saints at the rear of the temple yard. The houses must be searched at once.

Dudley led the searchers. By this time a score of the Mormon secret police had been summoned, and they joined in the search.

Three houses had been searched without finding the daring prisoner. The searchers entered the fourth house.

It was on the top floor of this house that Jesse James was hiding.

The search was a thorough one. The prisoner would be discovered if he remained in that room.

There was a rap on the door where the prisoner was hiding.

He opened the door, and the woman who had concealed him there entered the room.

"Quick! They are searching the house. You will be discovered. The searchers will be scattered through the house. You must try to reach the door. I will manage to have it unlocked. If you get safely away rescue Lena Burton, that is all I ask. This is all I can do for you."

As the woman spoke, she handed him a belt and two pistols. At a glance he saw they were his own weapons that had been taken from him when he fell into the hands of Dick Dudley and his band.

"With these I can fight my way through an army of Mormons," said Jesse, as he fastened the belt around him and examined the pistols to see that they were loaded.

The woman had not been out of the room two minutes, when there came another knock at the door.

The searchers had their game cornered.

Jesse had already decided on his plan of action.

He would throw open the door, fire a few shots into the searching party at close range, and then endeavor to reach the front door in the confusion before the others could get together from the different rooms.

With a quick movement he threw open the door, and then, in an instant, four shots rang out. There were five men in front of the door. Four of them fell. The fifth

was knocked senseless by a blow from the great outlaw's revolver.

Jesse James leaped over the bodies of his fallen foes, and ran down the stairway four steps at a time.

In the hallway down stairs he met two more elders running out of a room. They had been startled by the shots.

Another shot, another quick blow with the butt of a revolver, and there were two foes less between Jesse James and liberty.

A few bounds more and he was at the front door. The wife of the Mormon saint had kept her word. The door was unlocked.

It was the work of an instant to open the door, another bound and Jesse James stood on the street a free man.

But he had no time to lose. His pursuers would be after him in a moment.

As he dashed out at the door, he could hear heavy footsteps running through the house, as well as the shouts and curses, of the startled pursuers.

With the speed of a deer Jesse James leaped forward, and ran until he had turned a corner, and was out of sight of the temple where he had been a prisoner.

Then he stopped running. He realized that the whole city would soon be alarmed, and hundreds of men would be searching for him everywhere. He must use strategy to escape.

Walking on until he came to a quiet side street, Jesse found a barber shop in a small back room. He entered the shop, and finding no other customers present, ordered the barber to shave off his beard. This done, he had his beautiful auburn hair cut close, and then dyed a jet black.

When he left the shop he did not look anything like the man who had entered it half an hour before.

But he was not satisfied with this disguise. He must change his clothing.

Across the street from the barber shop he found a clothing store. He walked in, and telling a clerk that he was a cowboy, and had been East on a trip, asked for a complete working outfit. He was on his way back to the ranch, he said; he would have to leave his Eastern clothes behind.

When Jesse James left the clothing store half an hour later, he was dressed in the garb of a Western cowboy and his disguise was complete. His own mother would not have recognized him.

He wore the regulation flannel shirt, boots, and sombrero. He knew enough of the habits and manner of the cowboy to act the character he had assumed without fear of detection.

His disguise was completed none too soon. When he came out on the street the Mormon police and spies were searching everywhere for him.

The news of his daring escape and the shooting of the elders who tried to capture him spread over the city in a very short time, and then half the population joined in the search.

Jesse mingled freely with the crowds on the street, and asked what all the excitement was about. No one suspected him. In a short time he had an opportunity to test his disguise very thoroughly. He saw Dick Dudley coming toward him on the street. They met face to face.

The Mormon bandit looked at him closely, and then passed on. He had been completely deceived by the change in Jesse's appearance.

Then Jesse knew he was safe. If Dick Dudley could not penetrate his disguise, no other man in Utah could. For two days and nights Jesse James remained in Salt Lake City, seeing the sights of the Mormon capital and watching the search for himself.

The excitement of the hunt for the escaped spy had died out in that time, and the elders had decided that, in some mysterious way, the man had succeeded in getting out of the city.

Jesse decided to return to the ranch of Jack Webb, find his brother Frank, and go at once to the rescue of Lena Burton. If they could reach the home of the Mormon bandit before they returned, Jesse thought it would be an easy matter to find the girl and carry her to a place of safety.

He purchased a small mustang, and set out for the ranch of Jack Webb. He knew nothing of the country, and could only guess at the direction. The result was that he was lost on the plains at the end of his first day's ride. When he reached a spring of fresh water and camped for the night, he did not know whether he was going to or from Salt Lake City.

Just at dark three horsemen rode up to his camp, and asked if they could share it with him for the night.

Jesse James recognized the three men. One of them was Dick Dudley. The other two were members of his band of robbers.

They did not recognize the man they had asked to share his camp with them for the night.

It was purely a chance meeting, but Jesse recognized that it was a fortunate thing for him. He proposed to turn the chance meeting to good account.

In the rough and ready manner of a cowboy, which he was supposed to be, Jesse invited the newcomers to make themselves at home in his camp.

He soon found out that they were on their way back to the home of the Mormon bandit from Salt Lake City.

Jesse James suddenly made a desperate resolution. He would become a member of Dick Dudley's band. He believed that by joining the band he would sooner find an opportunity to rescue the woman who had once been his sweetheart, and to settle his score with Dudley.

He found no trouble in becoming a member of the Mormon bandit's band.

When Dudley had finished his supper he sat down by Jesse James, and engaged him in conversation.

"In the cattle business out this way?" was the bandit's first question.

"No."

"Farmer?"

"No, I don't belong in the territory. I am a stranger in these parts."

"Where from?"

"Texas."

"Don't like it down there?"

"Well, that country is not as healthy for me as it was. I thought I would try a change of air and climate."

"Your name is—?"

"You may call me Jim Brown."

"That's a good name, Jim. Have you struck anything out this way yet?"

"Nothing. Don't happen to know any one that wants a good cowboy, or a man who can do anything and is ready for any job that turns up so there is money in it?"

"Well, if you are a good all-round man, I might give you a job myself. I own a ranch up in the northern part of the territory."

"I can do most anything."

"Can you rob a train?"

"Well, that seems to be a leading question. Do you happen to be in the train robbing business in addition to running a ranch?"

"I occasionally take up a collection from rich travelers when times are hard."

"Good, then you are the man I am looking for. It was on account of a small loan from the express company that I left Texas without saying good-by to the sheriff."

"Do you know whom I am?"

"No."

"I am sometimes called the Mormon bandit. Possibly you may have heard of me."

"I have. To be frank, I was looking for you with the intention of becoming a member of your famous band, if there was a vacancy."

"I always have room for a good man. I expect to have some work on hand in a few days. You can go along, and, if you prove to be a man I can trust, I will then swear you in as member of my band."

"That suits me."

"Then to-morrow we go to my ranch."

At an early hour the following morning the Mormon outlaw set out for home, accompanied by his two trusty men and the new recruit for his band.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

THE RECRUITS ON A RAID—A MIDNIGHT RESCUE.

It was late in the day when they arrived at Dudley's ranch. The bandit called one of his servants to show the recruit a room. He told him he would have nothing to do until he was summoned to go out on a trip with him.

Jesse was determined to find and rescue Lena Burton, and if he could once get in the confidence of Dudley, enough to obtain free access to the rooms and grounds of the bandit's home, he thought the rest would be an easy matter.

He knew that Dick Dudley was cruel and brutal enough to lock Lena Burton in a dark room, and torture her to death by slow degrees.

He determined to learn her fate without delay.

That day the recruit was allowed to walk about the house and grounds unmolested, but he was soon made aware that his every step was watched. He saw nothing of Dudley all day, but some member of the band was always around.

Early the following morning Dick Dudley, at the head of his band of outlaws, set out for the ranch of John Ellis, bent on the capture of Effie Ellis. Jesse was surprised to learn their destination, but to all appearances joined heartily in their scheme. He had sworn that the girl should be his wife, and her rescue by Jesse James and her lover, Jack Webb, had made him furious.

Dudley was confident that Jesse James would get out of Utah as fast as possible, after his escape at Salt Lake City, and if he could get the girl in his possession again

there was no power in the territory that would save her from his brutal passion.

The ranch of Ellis was reached in due time, and the men were placed in position for the attack. Dudley was to remain concealed behind a hill some distance away. He was not going to take any chance of being seen and recognized in the act of committing a robbery in daylight. He was too cunning for that.

The raid was well planned, and was a complete success. Effie Ellis was at home, and was alone in the house. She did not dream that Dick Dudley was bold enough to come and take her by force from her father's house.

The bandits surrounded the house. Three of them dismounted and entered. Before Effie Ellis suspected their intentions she was a helpless prisoner.

Her scream for help was heard and answered.

Two of her father's men were at work near the house, and ran to help her, if possible. They boldly opened fire on the outlaws. A number of shots were exchanged.

While the firing was going on, Jesse James saw one of the outlaws running toward the barn with a torch. He was the man detailed to set fire to the buildings on the place.

Quick as a flash Jesse raised his rifle and fired.

The man with the torch fell dead.

Some of the outlaws saw the man fall, but they had not seen the shot that laid him low, and supposed he was shot by the cowboys.

The girl secured, there was a hasty retreat.

The outlaws were afraid that more cowboys would appear on the scene in a few moments, and they did not care to risk a battle with them.

The cattle were not driven off, and the buildings were not burned. The latter were saved by the good marksmanship of Jesse James.

Effie Ellis was not aware that she was again in the power of Dick Dudley until she was brought into his presence. At sight of his villainous face her heart sank, and she gave herself up for lost.

She knew now what her fate would be if she could not escape from this man. It would be a fate worse than death.

Dudley's face beamed with evil passion when the girl was handed over to him by his men.

"So my pretty girl you ran away from me, but you see I have found you again."

"What do you mean by this outrage?"

"That I am not going to let my pretty sweetheart get away from me this time."

"How dare you address me in that way!"

"I dare anything for love."

"Release me at once."

Dick Dudley only laughed at the girl's appeal to him to release her. He had no idea of giving up his prize.

"Come, my beauty, we must be going. Some more of your father's cowboys might come up, and then we would be forced to shoot them, which would be unpleasant."

Effie Ellis turned sick with fear, but she said nothing. She knew it would be useless to appeal to this man to release her, and she was too brave and proud to beg him, or to weep at the terrible prospect before her.

She made up her mind to face the worst bravely, but she had firmly resolved to die rather than become the wife of the Mormon bandit.

She thought of escape, but when she looked at the half-score of armed men around her she realized that there was no hope of getting away.

The girl was placed on the horse of the outlaw who had been shot and killed by Jesse James, and with Dudley riding close by her side the band set out for the home of the bandit.

On the long ride Dudley was very polite and attentive to his fair prisoner, and frequently tried to engage her in conversation, but she refused to talk to him.

Dudley and his band camped that night in a narrow wooded ravine, half-a-day's ride from the home of the bandit.

At the head of the ravine a spring of fresh water gushed forth, and it was a delightful spot for a camp.

The bandit did not anticipate pursuit that night, but as a matter of extra precaution he placed two sentries at the mouth of the ravine, several hundred yards below the camp.

Among the band of outlaws with Dudley there were several good cooks, and as they had brought along plenty of provisions a good supper was soon prepared.

Dudley himself served a steaming hot supper, with coffee, to his fair prisoner, and she ate liberally of it in order to keep up her strength.

One of the two men placed on guard at the mouth of the ravine was Lasso Pete.

Jesse dared not be seen talking to the girl, for fear of arousing the suspicions of the bandit chief.

It was a rule among the Mormon bandit's band that new men must do most of the work about the camp. In this way it was made the duty of Jesse James to prepare a couch of blankets for the prisoner.

This gave him an opportunity he had been watching for all day to speak a word to Effie Ellis.

Dudley watched his prisoner closely, and did not allow her to get very far from him, but while arranging the blankets on Effie's couch Jesse managed to whisper a few words to her without being detected.

While apparently deeply engrossed in his work, he said to her so low that no one else heard or suspected that he was speaking:

"Do not sleep to-night. I am a friend in disguise. Do not look at me, or attempt to speak to me, but be awake and ready for flight at midnight."

Effie Ellis heard the whispered words, and her heart gave a great bound of hope and joy; but she was not a little puzzled. Many times that day she had scanned the faces of the men around her, and her been unable to recognize any of them, or to discover a look of interest or sympathy in her fate.

She could not imagine who it was that promised to rescue her, but she was willing to trust any chance to get out of the power of Dick Dudley.

Soon after supper the members of the band wrapped their blankets about them, and, lying down on the ground, were soon fast asleep. Jesse James was among the first to lie down and apparently fall asleep.

He selected a position as near to where the prisoner was lying as he could without arousing suspicion.

Dudley was the last man in the camp to turn in. He had made several efforts to induce Miss Ellis to talk to him, but finally, when she complained of being tired and asked him to let her sleep, he desisted.

When midnight came the campfire had almost burned out, and every one around it seemed to be sound asleep.

But two persons were very wide awake.

In the stillness of the camp Effie Ellis could hear the beating of her own heart, and her nerves were strained to a high tension as she listened and waited for some move on the part of the man who had assured her that he was a friend.

She had no means of telling the time, but she was sure it was after midnight, and still there was no move on the part of her unknown friend.

Jesse James waited until he was sure that Dudley and all his band were sound asleep. The campfire still gave forth a feeble, flickering light, and he made no move.

The regular breathing of the outlaws told that they were sleeping.

Jesse James stirred, as if in his sleep, and made a slight noise. The regular breathing of the sleepers continued.

A few moments more and the campfire burned out, and the camp was in darkness.

Effie Ellis felt a light touch on her shoulder, then a voice close to her side whispered:

"Get up and follow me, but make no noise."

She obeyed at once, but her heart was beating so loud it seemed to her it would wake some of the sleeping outlaws.

She felt her hand grasped by her unknown friend, and a voice in the same low whisper said:

"Follow me."

As silently as two shadows, Jesse James and the fair prisoner crept from the camp.

Once one of the sleeping outlaws moved uneasily, and seemed about to wake, but he was only dreaming and soon slumbered soundly again.

Not a word was spoken as they cautiously made their way from the camp.

A hundred feet away they came to the horses. Without a word Jesse untied his own horse and the one that had been ridden by the prisoner that day. They were already saddled.

"We cannot mount yet; keep close to me and make no noise," said Jesse, still in a cautious whisper, and he led the two horses down the ravine.

Jesse James then crept forward in the darkness a little way, and then he gave a low signal.

It was answered by Lasso Pete, the Mexican.

Walking boldly forward to where the sentry stood, Jesse said, in a matter-of-fact way:

"I am sent to relieve you. You go to camp and sleep."

The Mexican gave a grunt of approval of this arrangement, and at once turned to go back to camp.

The instant the Mexican's back was turned Jesse James raised a heavy pistol and brought the butt of it down on the bandit's head with terrible force.

The man sank to the ground in a heap.

Jesse leaned over him and struck him two more blows on the head.

"You won't give the alarm to-night," said Jesse, as he hurried back to meet Effie Ellis.

The two led their horses forward a little further, and passed safely out of the ravine to the open plain.

There they mounted.

"May I ask one question now?" said Effie Ellis, as she was assisted on her horse.

"Yes."

"Who are you, and where will you take me, if we get away from the bandits in safety?"

"I have changed my appearance, or you would recognize me. I will take you to your home, Effie. I am your friend, Jesse James."

At this moment the horse ridden by Effie neighed aloud. The neigh was answered from the camp up the ravine. Then both of the horses gave answering neighs.

As the two riders plied whip and spur, and dashed away over the plains, they heard the clatter of horses' hoofs coming down the ravine.

They were being pursued.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

IN A LIVING TOMB—THE RESCUE OF LENA BURTON.

When Jesse James heard the flying hoofbeats of a half-score of horses behind him he naturally concluded that his escape with Dudley's prisoner had been discovered, and that the Mormon bandit's entire band was in full pursuit.

With the fair young girl in his charge, and her safety to be considered above all else, he was handicapped for fight with the bloodthirsty outlaws.

"We must race for it," said Jesse.

"If it was only daylight so we could see our way," said Effie, "we would have some show of giving them the slip."

"We must trust to our horses and ride hard," answered Jesse, grimly.

"Can it be possible that I am to fall into the hands of that brute again?" asked Effie.

"I think not," answered Jesse, in a tone of confidence.

The two riders lashed their horses, and urged the animals to their best speed.

Effie Ellis had lived on the plains long enough to know how to ride well, and she was a fearless horsewoman. She rode beside her rescuer, and kept well up with him.

It was a wild ride over the dark plains.

Straight ahead they rode, not knowing even the direction in which they were going. There was but one purpose in the race; that was to escape their pursuers, and they thought the only way to do that was to trust to the speed and endurance of their horses.

Jesse knew no shots would be fired by the pursuers for fear of hitting the girl. The only question was, did their horses have the speed and endurance necessary to win the race?

For several miles they rode in silence, and then it became evident that the race was rapidly telling on their horses. The brave animals had made a noble race of it, but they could no longer hold the pace.

The hoofbeats behind them were coming nearer every moment. The race would soon be over.

Suddenly the two horses wheeled to one side so quickly that any one except experienced riders would have been thrown. They had approached dangerously near a deep, narrow ravine, and had turned aside just in time to avoid going over head first.

The hoofbeats behind were sounding dangerously near now. There was no hope of winning the race, and Jesse James decided to make the fight for liberty then and there.

He called to Effie and they pulled up their horses.

Jesse leaped to the ground, and assisted Miss Ellis to dismount.

Then the two horses were placed in such a position that they would serve as a breastwork.

"Please give me a pistol," said Miss Ellis, as soon as she comprehended the situation.

"I will do the fighting, Miss Ellis," answered Jesse. "Do not be alarmed; you shall not be captured."

"But I can help you fight, and I may want the pistol for another purpose. Please give me one. I know how to use it, and I am not afraid to fight when my liberty is at stake."

"What is the other purpose for which you may want the pistol?"

"If we should be recaptured, I will kill myself rather than fall into the power of Dick Dudley again. I prefer death to dishonor."

"You are a brave young lady," said Jesse, and he handed her one of his pistols.

"Thank you. This will save me if the worst comes to the worst."

The moon was just rising over the mountains far to the east, and cast a faint light across the plains.

The horses closing up on them could be seen now, a dim, black, moving mass.

A little nearer they came, and then Jesse James, who stood with a Winchester rifle in his hands, uttered an exclamation that sounded very much like an oath.

"What is it?" asked Effie.

"Look at the horses!"

Effie looked, and in a moment saw that the horses, now so close on them, were all riderless.

The horses of the Mormon bandit and his outlaws heard the neigh of Effie's horse, and, breaking their halters, had dashed away in pursuit of their two companions.

The long, hard race over the dark plains, that was supposed to be a race for life and liberty, had simply been one with loose and harmless horses.

Now, that they realized that all danger was past, and that they had really been in no danger all along, the humor of the situation dawned on the couple who had just made preparations to make a desperate fight for their lives.

Miss Ellis burst into a merry laugh, in which Jesse joined.

"We had a jolly ride, anyway," said the young lady.

"And as the Mormons are now on foot, I guess we will have no trouble in keeping ahead of them," said Jesse.

"Suppose we keep them on foot for a while," suggested Effie. "If we can secure their horses and take them away with us, it may be some time before they can obtain others."

By this time the horses had all come to a standstill, and tired out by their long run, it was no trouble to catch them. Most of them still had their halters about their necks. On his saddle Jesse James carried a long rope. With this it was only a few moments' work to fasten the string of horses together, so they could be easily led or driven.

The horses of the outlaws secured, the two mounted and resumed their journey. The moon was shining

brightly now, and they could make their way without danger or difficulty.

In a short time they came to a small stream of water, with a few trees along the banks, and there they went into camp. It was only two hours until daylight, but spreading their blankets on the ground, Jesse prepared a comfortable bed for Miss Ellis, and insisted that she lie down and get some sleep. She was very tired after the exciting events of the night, and slept soundly until sunrise.

The little party had no food with them, and their only chance for breakfast was to push on to the nearest ranch.

When daylight came, Effie Ellis was sufficiently familiar with the country, to determine the direction of her father's house, and they set out at once. They had gone less than ten miles when they saw a large party of well-armed men riding rapidly toward them.

The party was headed by the father and lover of Miss Ellis. They had gathered the men from their ranches, and started in pursuit of the band of Mormon bandits. This time they were bent, not merely on rescuing Miss Ellis, but on wiping out the desperate band of robbers that had so long been a terror to all the Gentiles in the territory.

Frank James was in the party. He had tracked his brother to Salt Lake City and back, but had found no opportunity to aid him.

Laughing and crying for joy, Miss Ellis kissed her father and lover by turns, and it was several moments before she could speak. Then she introduced her father to the man who had saved her from Dick Dudley.

"I often heard of you as train-robber and outlaw," said Mr. Ellis to Jesse James, "but you have saved my daughter from a fate worse than death, and I am your friend. You will always be welcome at my home."

Jack Webb came forward and shook hands with Jesse.

"I owe you more than I can ever repay," he said. "Twice you have saved the woman I love. When I can serve you in any way remember I am always your friend."

"You may be able help me now," said Jesse.

"How?"

"Perhaps you remember that Lena Burton is still in the power of Dudley."

"Yes, yes. She must be saved."

"The Mormons are without horses now. If I can reach the castle back in the hills before they return, the rest will be easy, but to guard against surprise, I need men."

"I will go with you and take the men we have here. They are all brave fellows, and can be depended on in a fight."

A brief consultation was held between Jesse and Frank James, Jack Webb and John Ellis. It was agreed that Ellis should return home with his daughter, accompanied by a few of the cowboys from his ranch to guard against a possible surprise by Dudley, while Jack Webb, with the other men, would join the James boys on an expedition to the home of the Mormon bandit, to find and rescue Lena Burton.

This time they would go prepared to take her by force, and there would be no need to resort to strategy.

There was a ranch near where this meeting occurred, and the entire party went there first, to obtain some

food for themselves and horses, for Effie Ellis and her brave rescuer had not yet tasted breakfast.

The owner of the ranch was a friend of Jack Webb, and he supplied the entire party with a good breakfast and fed their horses.

After a short rest, the men who were to rescue Lena Burton from a living tomb in the home of the Mormon bandit set out on their journey. They were all well-armed and well-mounted, and under the leadership of such a man as Jesse James, they were confident of being able to wipe the Mormon outlaws out of existence.

By pushing ahead Jesse James hoped to be able to reach the bandit's home and find Lena Burton before Dudley returned. If possible he would first rescue the girl, and escort her to a place of safety, and then he would return to settle his score with Dudley.

Jesse had no intention of leaving Dick Dudley in Utah alive.

The ride to the home of the bandit carried the rescuing party past the place where Dudley's band had camped the night before. It was the camp from which Jesse James had rescued Effie Ellis.

Only one of the outlaws was found in the camp. The others had started on foot to follow the trail of their horses as soon as daylight came.

The one who remained at camp was Lasso Pete, the Mexican. He was hanging to the limb of a tree by the same lasso with which he had so often done good work for his chief. On his breast there was a written placard bearing the words:

"A traitor to Dudley and to Mormonism. Let other traitors beware."

When he found that Jesse James had gone, and had taken Effie Ellis with him, Dick Dudley had suspected the Mexican sentry of treachery, notwithstanding the wound that showed how he had been knocked senseless by Jesse James.

There was no trial or investigation of the man's claim that he was innocent. Suspicion was enough for Dick Dudley in this case. The Mexican was promptly strung up to the nearest limb, and his body left hanging there.

When Jesse and Frank James saw the lifeless body of Lasso Pete, and read the notice on his breast, they knew they would meet a similar fate if they should happen to fall into the hands of the Mormon bandit in their present disguise.

The rescuing party went a few miles beyond the abandoned camp, and halted for the night. They had brought along enough provisions for a scant supper and breakfast, and on the banks of a small stream they found abundant grazing for the horses.

They were only a few miles from the home of the outlaw, and sentries were posted all around the camp that night, to guard against the possibility of a surprise by the Mormons, who might be returning from their fruitless chase after the escaped prisoner and horses.

But they were not disturbed during the night, and at an early hour set out for the home of Dick Dudley.

The big stone house that looked so much like a prison, as it was in reality, seemed to be deserted when Jesse James and his friends approached. There was no sign of life on the outside, and it was evident the outlaw had not yet returned.

To guard against any possible surprise or ambush by a concealed foe, Jesse James divided his men and they approached the house from all directions.

No one appeared to meet or resist them.

A number of heavy knocks on the door were finally answered by the woman, known as wife No. 1, the woman who, for a few small favors, had remained true as steel to the scoundrel who had ruined her life.

She looked at the band of armed men in surprise. She recognized Jesse James as one of the new men who had gone away with Dudley on his last raid, and at once she suspected treachery, and was on her guard to protect her outlaw husband so far as possible.

"What do you want?" she demanded, as Jesse James attempted to enter the house.

"I want Lena Burton, and I am going to find her."

"There is no one by that name here."

"You may not know her by that name. I believe she is known here as wife No. 15. Do you know her by that name?"

"No, I do not know who you are looking for."

"You lie."

The woman's eyes flashed, but she made no answer.

"Will you tell me where she is?"

"I shall tell you nothing."

"Then I shall search the house and the secret caves, until I find her."

"This is a private house, and you shall not search it."

"It is the house and the hiding-place of the greatest scoundrel unhung, and I am going through it from top to bottom to learn all of its mysteries."

"You shall not."

"And who will prevent me?"

"I will," and as the woman spoke she attempted to close the door. She was not quick enough.

Jesse James pushed the door wide open, and pushed the woman to one side.

She reached for a bell-rope.

"Don't do that," and Jesse James caught her hand before it touched the rope.

"No; you won't sound any alarms, nor summon any help. I think you are the biggest fool living to try to protect a man like Dick Dudley. I don't want to be rude, and don't want any trouble, but I am going to find Lena Burton, and I will see that you do not interfere with the search. If any members of Dudley's band put in an appearance while we are here they will need a funeral to-morrow. Do you understand now that I mean business?"

The woman made no answer, and Jesse told two of his men to take her into the nearest room, and stand guard over her until the search of the place was completed. They were not to offer any violence, but to see that she did not leave the room, or communicate with any one while the place was being searched.

Then Jesse detailed a number of men to guard every approach to the house. Dudley and his men might return at any moment.

Then with Frank, Jack Webb and two cowboys, Jesse started on a search through the gloomy old house for Lena Burton, the woman he knew was buried alive somewhere.

Jesse had not forgotten the secret cave, the cave within a cave, and he started to search that first. He knew that

Dick Dudley was cruel and inhuman enough to confine the girl there.

In such a prison a strong man would soon go mad, and Jesse James shuddered as he thought of his old sweetheart confined there through the days and nights since she had fallen into the hands of the Mormon bandit after her first rescue.

He had not forgotten the way, down the dark and narrow stairway, to the basement, and thence to the entrance of the secret underground passage.

Jesse led the way, and the others followed close behind him.

Women could be seen running about the house with white, scared faces. They did not understand the meaning of the search, and had no idea what was going to happen. They had witnessed cruelties enough since they had been Mormon wives to make them tremble at anything.

But the only woman in the house who was true to her outlaw husband was under guard. The rescuing party had nothing to fear from the others. In fact, some of them would have been glad to be of assistance in the search, for Lena Burton was popular with her companions in misery.

With a lantern in one hand, to light the way through the long, dark passage, and a revolver in the other, Jesse James led the way toward the secret passage and the chamber of horrors.

He expected to find a guard at the cave, if the girl was a prisoner there, and he was going prepared for fight, if it became necessary. He would make short work of the man who dared to oppose him now.

With impatient haste, Jesse felt his way along the walls of the cellar, until he found the door leading to the secret passage. The lantern seemed to intensify the hideous darkness down there.

The door was reached at last. He turned the bolt. It was locked.

With an oath, Jesse threw his weight against the door. It broke from its hinges, and fell with a crash.

"This way, boys!" cried Jesse, and he rushed forward, along the dark and gloomy passage, toward the secret cave. He cocked his revolver as he went forward. There would probably be a sentinel at the door of the cave.

The door leading from the underground passage to the main cave, the chamber of horrors, was open. There was no guard or sentinel in sight.

Jesse sprang forward and entered the main cave. His four companions were close behind him.

"This is the door," Jesse cried, and he leaped forward toward the entrance to the inner cave.

He pulled open the door and looked in.

The little cave was empty.

"Curse the brute! I wonder if he has murdered Lena?"

Jesse James' thin lips tightened over his teeth, and a dangerous glitter came into his flashing eyes.

"If he has harmed her I'll have a score to settle that his cowardly life cannot pay."

"Perhaps she is locked in some room in the house," suggested Frank.

"I believe he has killed her, but we will search the house."

Jesse turned, and led the way along the dark passage back to the cellar.

He sprang up the narrow stairs toward the first floor. A woman was passing along the hall just then, one of the bandit's wives.

Without turning her head, she said in a voice just loud enough for Jesse to hear:

"There is a door on the other side of the cellar. It opens into a dark room. Search that."

The woman passed on. In fact, she had made no stop while she was speaking.

Jesse repeated to his companions what she had said. "Better look for the dark room she speaks of. She could have no interest in deceiving us," suggested Frank. The five men turned, and entered the cellar again.

They groped their way along the wall on the side opposite the entrance to the secret passage. They had almost reached the four ends of the cellar, when they found a small door. It was securely locked.

By the light of the lantern the five men looked about the cellar for something with which to break the lock. They found a heavy iron bar.

One hard blow, there was a crash and the door flew open.

Jesse James, lantern in hand, started to enter the door. From the dark room there came a faint groan.

"Great Heavens, is she a prisoner here?" cried Jesse. He raised the lantern and stepped forward. The door opened into a low-ceiled room, not more than eight by ten feet in size.

There was another groan, and Jesse called:

"Lena, Lena! are you here?"

A faint groan was the only answer.

In a few moments the light of the lantern dispelled some of the blackness and gloom, and they could see objects inside the little room.

In a corner of the place there was a rude couch. On the couch was the form of a woman, so thin and pale, she seemed a ghost lying there in the gloom.

Jesse James held the lantern above the face of the woman.

"My God! it is Lena!" he exclaimed.

Stooping, he lifted the thin form from the couch.

There was a rattle of chains and a groan.

Tenderly Jesse laid the girl down, and by the light of the lantern he and Frank examined the couch.

The girl was chained like a wild beast.

A heavy chain held her feet together, and one end of it was securely fastened in the wall. A smaller chain was around the girl's wrists, and this was secured to the strong railing of the couch.

Accustomed as they were to scenes of horror and cruelty, every man in the little room shuddered.

"Speak to me, Lena. Tell me, is this the work of Dick Dudley?" said Jesse.

The only answer was a groan. The poor girl was not strong enough to talk.

She had been chained down to that rude couch, and left there to starve in that dark room.

The brain of Dick Dudley never planned a more horrible death for his worst enemy.

The brave rescuers had come just in time. A few hours more in that terrible darkness and foul air of the under-

ground prison, and Lena Burton would have been beyond human aid.

The iron bar that had been used to break the lock on the door was brought in, and the chains that held the poor girl prisoner were quickly broken.

Then Jesse James took her up in his arms, and carried her tenderly to the floor above. In one of the rooms he laid his burden on a lounge, and turning to Frank told him to find some of the women in the house, and compel them to bring food and brandy.

The poor girl was almost starved.

The other wives of the bandit were soon found, and most of them were willing and anxious to do all they could for Lena.

They brought brandy and warm food, and did all their power to relieve her terrible sufferings.

Brandy and water, then food, was forced down her throat, and the poor girl soon began to revive under their influence. She opened her eyes, and seeing Jesse James standing by her side, a smile came over her face. She tried to speak, but he put a finger on his lips and told her to go to sleep and rest.

Lena closed her eyes, and was soon sleeping the deep sleep of complete exhaustion.

Not till then did Jesse James leave her side. His face was white and stern, but he said nothing.

"I am going to find out who is responsible for this," he said, to Frank, and then he led the way to the room where the old woman known as wife No. 1 was under guard.

"I want you to tell me," he said, to this woman, "who chained Lena Burton in that dark room in the cellar."

"Why do you want to know?" asked the woman, sullenly.

"Because the one who did it shall die, the slow, torturing death, which they planned for her."

"I shall tell you nothing."

"I will find a way to make you tell me."

A volley of rifle-shots and the yelling of a score of cowboys interrupted the conversation at that point.

Jesse ran to the front door. He saw a crowd of armed men advancing toward the house, and firing on his guards as they came.

Dudley and his men had returned.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

THE DEATH OF DICK DUDLEY.

Dick Dudley, the Mormon bandit, had failed to recapture his rescued prisoner, Effie Ellis, or his stampeded horses.

He and his men had returned home on foot.

They had learned on the way that they were being hunted by a large body of armed men, led by two strangers, so they came expecting a fight.

When Dudley came in sight of his home, and saw a few cowboys on guard around it, he thought some Gentile sheriff had been bold enough to lead a raid on his place. The big bandit smiled at the prospect of a skirmish with a few cowboys led by a sheriff. He knew they would fly at the first fire from his band, as they had done so many times before.

Dudley did not dream of the real identity of the two

men in command of the cowboys this time, nor of the real object of their visit to his house.

The Mormon outlaws, at Dudley's command, scattered out into a line that formed a semicircle, and in that order advanced on the house, firing at the cowboys as they came. The latter returned the first volley, and then fell back toward the big house for shelter.

With rifles in their hands, Jesse James and his four companions sprang into the midst of the fight. They fired a few shots each with great rapidity, and half-a-dozen of the bandit's band lay dead on the ground.

Jesse fired three shots at Dick Dudley, but the big bandit seemed to bear a charmed life. Not one of the bullets hit him.

But Dick Dudley realized that something unusual had occurred. This was no Gentile sheriff with a posse of cowboys fighting this way.

When Dudley saw the deadly aim of the men who had taken possession of his house, his dark face turned pale.

Only two men living would fight that way in the face of such odds. Could it be that he had Jesse and Frank James to fight again? the big bandit asked himself.

Dudley called his men off, and they retired behind a small hill out of gunshot, to discuss the situation, and decide on some plan of attack.

Taking advantage of this movement, Jesse James called his men around him to receive his orders.

The outlaws outnumbered them two to one, but Jesse James had determined that his last battle with Dick Dudley should be fought then and there, and that one of them should die before it was over.

He gave his men a few instructions, and told them when they shot to shoot to kill, and to waste no ammunition.

"But they are two to our one," one of the cowboys suggested.

"If you are afraid, drop out of the fight," answered Jesse, as he turned away. The cowboy took his place in the line.

Half an hour passed and nothing had been seen or heard of the bandits. Jesse suspected that they were up to some trick, and told Frank to go out and see what they were doing.

Frank crept cautiously forward to a high point of ground from which he could see over the hill behind which the bandits had taken refuge.

He saw them moving rapidly away, led by Dudley. They were making a circle to the west, and in a moment he divined their intention. They were heading for the ravine that led to the cave. If they could reach the cave without being discovered, they could easily get into the house through the secret underground passage.

Frank ran back, and told Jesse what he had discovered. "Good, we will prepare a reception for them in the cave. Come in."

Jesse led the way down to the dark cellar.

A few moments before one of the cowboys had discovered down there several kegs of powder and a fuse. He at once informed Jesse of his discovery, and, when the latter learned that Dudley and his men were on their way to the cave, he determined to wipe the whole miserable band out of existence at one stroke.

Calling three cowboys to assist him, Jesse led the way to the cellar. There each man shouldered a keg of

powder. Then they ran hurriedly through the dark passageway to the cave. There the kegs were broken open, and the powder poured in a heap on the floor. Then one end of the long fuse was made fast in the middle of the pile of powder.

Then they hurried back through the underground passage, Jesse carrying the fuse. It was long enough to reach from the cave to the cellar.

The trap arranged, Jesse sent a man to the top of a hill back of the cave, from which a view of the narrow ravine could be obtained. This man was to give a signal when the bandits approached the cave.

With a smile of satisfaction, Jesse stood at the door awaiting the signal that would inform him that Dick Dudley and his men were walking into the trap set for them.

He did not have long to wait. In five minutes the signal came, and then Jesse ran down to the cellar, and with his own hands lit the fuse.

Then he came back to the front door and waited. The seconds dragged along until they seemed hours.

Could the fuse have gone out?

No, it had done its duty well.

There was a heavy rumbling explosion that sounded like a peal of distant thunder, and then the ground trembled as from an earthquake shock.

A great mass of rock and earth was lifted high into the air, directly over the cave, and fell back again with a mighty crash.

No man who was in the cave at the time of that explosion survived it.

Death, swift and sure, had overtaken the Mormon bandits at last.

But they were not all dead. The man who had been sent to the top of the hill to signal their approach, now gave a second signal, and pointed to the ravine below.

Jesse James ran up the hill, and, looking down the ravine, he saw five of the bandits. They had been behind the others, and did not reach the cave in time to meet death in the terrible explosion.

One of the five men who had escaped, Jesse James quickly recognized as Dick Dudley, and he ground his teeth in rage and disappointment. His enemy still lived.

But there was nothing to be done but wait for another opportunity, and Jesse swore a terrible oath that the Mormon bandit should not escape him next time.

It would be useless to attempt to follow the Mormon bandit, and the remnant of his band at that time. They knew the numerous hiding-places, in the hills near by, too well. It would be impossible to trail them, and then Dudley would soon rally to his support every Mormon within fifty miles.

Lena Burton must be cared for first. As soon as she was safely out of the reach of Mormonism and polygamy, Jesse James would return to settle his scores with the man who had ruined her life, perhaps killed her, for it was doubtful if she could recover from the terrible effects of the long confinement in that dark, underground room.

Lena was awake, and was strong enough to talk, when Jesse went back to her room after the cave explosion.

She smiled at sight of the man who had been her truest and best friend, risking his life to save her.

"You are so good," she said, as she held out a thin, white hand to Jesse, and then drew it back with a cry of

pain, as she caught sight of the marks of the chains on her wrist.

"Do not mind those scars," said Jesse, tenderly. "You are free now, and I am going to take you back to Missouri to your mother and home."

A flood of happy tears told him how happy she was at the prospect of seeing the old home again.

"Tell me, Lena," Jesse asked, "did Dudley chain you in that dark cell?"

"Yes; he found that I helped in the rescue of the new wife, or the girl he was going to make No. 16, and he swore he would teach me a lesson I should never forget. I was to remain chained to my couch in that dungeon for a week. He did not mean to kill me, but the terrible torture was driving me mad."

"He will never chain any one else in a dark dungeon."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that I am going to kill Dick Dudley as soon as I can find him."

"Please don't."

"Why do you want his life spared?"

"That I may kill him myself."

"You are not able."

"I am weak now, but I will grow strong for the sake of revenge. That man has ruined my life forever, and in the torture of that dark cell I was only kept alive by my hopes of some sort of revenge. I swore that if ever I escaped I would hunt him down, and kill him by slow torture, if possible. It will be a poor revenge for all I have suffered; but I can die happy if I first see that brute at my feet suffering the pain of death in its most horrible form."

"I will promise you that he shall die, and you shall see him dead at your feet."

"That is not enough. Let me kill him."

"We must find him before we can kill him."

"I will find him. I will search the world over for him, and when I find him I shall kill him."

Lena Burton's thirst for vengeance helped her to gain strength. The second day after her rescue from the dark dungeon she was able to walk about the house, and a day later she announced that she was able to stand the journey to the railroad station.

Dick Dudley had not returned to his home. He was supposed to be hiding somewhere in the hills with the remnant of his band of outlaws.

The stockmen and Gentile farmers of that section of Utah were fully aroused at last, and had decided to wipe out the last vestige of the band of thieves and outlaws.

Small parties of armed men were searching everywhere for Dudley and the few men with him. If the great Mormon bandit fell into the hands of these men he would be given a speedy trial, and there would be no escape from the decree of the court.

Jesse James decided there was no use waiting for Dudley to return to his home. Bold as the Mormon was, he would not dare meet the little army of angry cowboys and ranchmen who were hunting for him until he could gather around him another band of Mormon followers. Until he could get his men together he would remain in hiding in the hills, where it would be almost impossible to find him.

Most of the men who had gone with the James boys to the rescue of Lena Burton joined with some of the

numerous bands of vigilants to continue the search for the Mormon bandit.

Jesse and Frank, with Jack Webb and two of his men started with Lena Burton for Webb's ranch. Lena was anxious to get away from the place where she had suffered so much, and she said she was strong enough to stand the journey.

She wanted to go at once to the nearest railroad station, and there take a train for Missouri to see her mother. She would return to Utah to slay Dick Dudley when she had fully regained her strength.

Jack Webb would not consent that she should leave Utah so soon. She must go with Jesse and Frank to his ranch, and there accept his generous hospitality for a few days.

There was another reason why he insisted on her remaining a short time.

In a few days he was to be married to Effie Ellis, and he insisted that she must remain to the wedding.

The little party set out for Webb's ranch early on morning. The two cowboys rode a short distance in front to guard against the danger of attack by a wandering band of Mormon outlaws.

Jesse and Lena rode together, while Jack Webb and Frank James brought up the rear.

They did not dream that Dick Dudley would dare follow them, but the men were all well armed and ready for any emergency.

Every few miles they met small bands of armed ranchmen and cowboys hunting the Mormon bandit and his men.

The honest people of Utah were fully aroused, and they were determined to put an end to the career of Dick Dudley.

By noon Jesse and his little party had ridden twenty miles, and for two hours they had seen no cowboys.

They halted at a spring of fresh water to eat a cold lunch and give Lena Burton an opportunity to rest a little while.

They had finished their lunch, and the horses were saddled, ready to resume the journey, when the quick ear of Frank James detected the sound of galloping hoofs far in their rear. He ran at once to a little rising ground near by, and, looking back, he saw they were pursued. A party of twenty armed horsemen were following the trail.

At the head of the pursuing party rode a large, broad-shouldered man, who was instantly recognized as Dick Dudley.

Frank ran back to the camp, and reported what he had discovered.

Jesse smiled grimly. The opportunity he wanted of fight with Dudley—a fight to the death—was coming sooner than he expected.

True, the Mormons outnumbered them five to one, but Jesse cared little for the odds.

However, with the start they had, he could choose his own battle-ground, and this he decided to do.

A mile ahead there was a gently sloping hill, which rose to an elevation of some fifty feet above the level of the plains.

If they could reach the summit of this hill ahead of the Mormons it would act as a natural breastwork, and they could win the battle without danger to themselves.

Jesse gave the word to mount, and in a few moments they were galloping over the plains toward the hill.

They had gone less than two hundred yards when they were discovered by Dudley and his men.

With a shout the Mormon bandits put spurs to their horses, and then began a lively race for the protecting summit of the hill a mile away.

It was an exciting race, but with the start Jesse and his friends had, there could be no doubt of the result.

But suddenly a new danger loomed up in view.

Away to the left of the course they were riding there suddenly appeared, over the crest of a hill, a great black mass of running animals coming toward them, with a roar of hoofbeats that sounded like the heavy billows of a stormy sea.

It was an immense herd of stampeded cattle.

They were coming at right angles to the direction Jesse and his friends were riding, and would cross their path half-way to the hill.

To turn back would be to fall into the hands of Dick Dudley and his outlaws.

To turn to the right meant to be run down and trampled to death by that wild herd of cattle. No human power could stop them, or turn them aside, until they began to grow tired from a long run.

There was only one chance for safety from the two dangers. That was to ride straight ahead, and ride fast enough to cross the path of the stampeded herd ahead of that living mass, that meant death to men or animals who got in front of it.

It was a desperate chance. If a horse stumbled and fell, horse and rider would be ground to death under the hoofs of those beasts.

"Straight ahead! Follow me! Ride hard!"

Jesse James gave the command, and, sinking spurs into the flanks of his horse, he rode ahead.

The others followed, and even the horses seemed to understand the danger. They could see and hear the flying herd of cattle, and they sprang forward like blooded racers in the homestretch.

With a roar louder than an angry sea, the cattle came on, but Jesse James had calculated speed and distance well that time.

They crossed the danger line with almost a hundred yards to spare.

Then for the first time they pulled up their horses to look back at the great sea of cattle rushing by them.

For a moment, while they were flying from the greater danger, Dick Dudley and his men had been forgotten.

One awful wail of despair, heard above the roar of the thousands of hoofbeats, recalled the Mormon bandits now.

Dudley had seen the danger from the flying herd, and, like Jesse James, he had decided that safety lay in getting across their path ahead of them, but the big bandit had not calculated distance so closely.

The Mormons spurred their horses forward, but too late they realized they could not cross the path of the herd in time.

It was too late to turn back, too late to turn aside. Before they could check their horses the waves of the living sea were upon them, and in a moment they had been trampled to death.

One of them, no one ever knew who it was, uttered one terrible scream of terror, a scream heard above the terrible roar.

Jesse James and Lena Burton both turned in time to see the herd of cattle cheat them of their revenge.

The men they had sworn to kill went out of sight like a pebble tossed in the ocean, and were crushed to death before their eyes.

The flying herd of cattle was soon out of sight, and then Jesse and his friends rode back to the spot where the Mormon bandits went down.

They found only a confused heap of torn flesh and broken bones, with here and there little pools of blood that had trickled from the hideous-looking mass.

Dick Dudley, the Mormon bandit, had been saved from the vengeance of Jesse James.

He had met death, swift and terrible, in a desperate attempt to recapture a woman, whose life he had ruined.

Lena Burton turned away from the mass of flesh and blood with a shudder.

She had brooded over her terrible wrongs, until she could have killed Dick Dudley, and smiled to see him lying dead at her feet; but there was something terrible and revolting in death in the form in which it had come to the Mormon bandit so suddenly.

Men and horses were cut to pieces by the sharp hoofs of the great herd of cattle, and all lay in one confused heap.

"Leave them to the wolves," said Jesse, and the party mounted and rode away, leaving the remains of the Mormon bandits lying there on the plains.

They continued their journey without further adventure, and late that evening reached the ranch of Jack Webb.

The following morning Lena Burton went to the home of Effie Ellis, to remain until the wedding the following week. She was weak and tired from her long ride and sorely in need of rest. She would not undertake the long journey back to Missouri until she was stronger.

Jesse and Frank James had promised Jack Webb to remain and attend his wedding.

When Jack Webb and Effie Ellis were married the following week, the bride received two presents of one thousand dollars in gold.

They came from her husband's friends, Jesse and Frank James.

TO BE CONTINUED.

YOUR OPINIONS OF FAMOUS MEN.

Grand Prize Contest



**22 VALUABLE PRIZES
GIVEN AWAY.**

Here is a chance for every reader of **JESSE JAMES WEEKLY**.

Boys, you have all heard of the plucky little Kansan who has been making himself famous on the other side of the world.

What do you think of him?

What characteristics do you see in his face?

What has he done, anyway?

What do you think is the best thing he ever did?

The boys who can best answer such questions applying to any famous American, known for his brave deeds, will win handsome prizes.

Here is the plan of one of the most novel contests ever placed before the American boys.

Look up what interesting facts you can find about any famous American. Then write them out in your own words, stating your own opinion of him, his appearance, and the particular achievement which pleases you the most. The first prize will be awarded to the person sending in the most interesting and best written article; the next best will win the second prize, and so on. It makes no difference how short they are, but no contribution must be longer than 500 words.

LOOK AT THE PRIZES.

TWO FIRST PRIZES

The two who send us the most interesting and best written articles will each receive a first-class Camera, complete with achromatic lens, and loaded with six exposures each. Absolutely ready for use. For square pictures $3\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ inches; capacity six exposures without reloading; size of camera $4\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2} \times 5$ inches; weight 15 ounces; well made, covered with grain leather and handsomely finished.

FIVE SECOND PRIZES

The five who send us the next best articles will each receive a "Sterling" Magic Lantern Outfit, together with 72 admission tickets and a large show bill. Each lantern is 10 inches high, 4 inches in diameter, with a $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch plano-complex condensing lens and a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch double complex objective lens. Uses kerosene oil only.

FIVE THIRD PRIZES

The five who send us the next best articles will each receive a Handsome Pearl Handled Knife. These knives have each four blades of the best English steel, hardened and tempered. The handle is pearl, the lining brass, and the bolsters German silver.

For ten next best descriptions, ten sets of the latest and most entertaining Puzzles and Novelties on the market, numbering three puzzles each, including Uncle Isaac's Pawnshop Puzzle; the Magic Marble Puzzle and the Demon Outfit.

This Contest closes December 1. All contributions must be in by that date.

SEND IN YOUR ARTICLES AT ONCE, BOYS.

We are going to publish all of the best ones during the progress of the Contest.

We will have to reserve to ourselves the right of judging which article has the most merit, but our readers know that they may depend upon Street & Smith, and on their absolute fairness and justice in conducting Contests. This one will be no exception to the rule.

REMEMBER!

Whether your contribution wins a prize or not, it stands a good chance of being published, together with the name of the writer.

To become a contestant for the prize you must cut out the **Character Contest Coupon**, printed in this issue. Fill it out properly, and send it to **JESSE JAMES WEEKLY**, care of Street & Smith, 238 William Street, New York City, together with your article. No contribution will be considered that does not have this coupon accompanying it.

COUPON.

"JESSE JAMES WEEKLY" CHARACTER CONTEST No. 1.

Date.....1901

Name

City or Town.....

State.....

CHARACTER PRIZE CONTEST.

During the progress of the Prize Character Contest this department will be devoted to the publication of the best articles sent in by the contestants.

Here are some of the best ones received this week.

The Victor of the First Battle in the War With Spain.

(By George Bird, Watertown, N. Y.)

I have read all of your Jesse James Stories from No. 1 to date, so noticed your prize contest, and thought I would become a contestant. My article is on Theodore Roosevelt, as he is my special favorite. I remember reading about the first battle in the Spanish war, when Roosevelt was lieutenant-colonel of the Rough Riders. They had landed in Cuba a few miles from Santiago.

Roosevelt pleaded with General Shafter that his men be permitted to go in the advance column which was to move on Santiago, and the request was granted. The advance was begun at once. On Thursday, the 23d, the army advanced to Juragua, which the enemy hastily evacuated, and by night a junction had been effected between the main divisions of the invaders at a point on the high ground surrounding Santiago city and within ten miles of the guns of Morro. This advance was effected without a single check. Beyond Juragua, the Spanish suddenly appeared in force, expecting, apparently, to take the vanguard of our army by surprise.

At daybreak, Friday, June 24th, the guarding column which included the Rough Riders continued its forced march. Toiling through swamps and beating their way through the dense brush, the Americans had come within eight miles of Santiago. The sound of trees falling under the blows of axes was a warning that the enemy was ahead and preparing defenses. A scouting party of Cubans familiar with the country was immediately sent forward, but they had not gone far into the obscure thickets before firing began in front of them. They protected themselves as well as they could and returned the fire. Shooting as they plunged through the entangling branches and firing at the quick flashes of the Spanish Mausers, the Rough Riders and the regulars, led by Colonel Wood and Lieutenant-Colonel Roosevelt, went with a cheer into the first fighting of the general advance on Santiago.

Thus began the engagement known to history as the battle of Las Guasimas. It was intensely hot as the

men advanced in the conflict. They were tired and dirty, but eager for battle. Lieutenant-Colonel Roosevelt led his men to the charge. He was never lacking, this leader of the regiment.

Sergeant Hamilton Fish, Jr., was the first man killed by the Spanish fire. He was near the head of the column. He shot one Spaniard who was firing from the cover of a dense patch of underbrush. When a bullet struck his breast he sank at the foot of a tree, with his back against it. Captain Capron stood over him, shooting, and others rallied round him, covering the fallen man. He lived twenty minutes. He gave a small ladies' hunting case watch from his belt to a messmate as a last souvenir.

Some minutes later Captain Capron fell mortally wounded. The charge was soon over. The Spaniards broke and ran, and for the first time our soldiers had the pleasure which the Spaniards had been experiencing all through the engagement of shooting with the enemy in sight.

Sam Houston's Life with the Indians.

(By Wesley Carter, Nashville, Tenn.)

My hero is General Sam Houston. I think his career was one of the most wonderful I ever heard about. He was six feet high and had a magnificent figure. I would like to submit an article about his life with the Indians.

You know, he was at one time Governor of Tennessee, and it was while in that office that he married the lady that brought him so much trouble. I don't say it was all her fault, but neither do I think it was all Houston's fault, as the people said at the time.

Well, anyway, Houston separated from his wife within three months after their marriage, and the people raised such a stew about the affair that Houston resigned from the governorship and went into exile among the Indians.

Some people criticize that, too, but they should remember that he was on very friendly terms with the Indians, and he was just that kind of a man.

Well, the Indians he went to live with were the Cherokees, and their chief was Oolooteka, a noble-looking Indian who was six feet high and over sixty years old at that time. He had ten or twelve servants, a large plantation and five hundred head of cattle.

When the old chief saw Houston he threw his arms around him and embraced him with great affection.

Houston passed nearly three years among the Cherokees.

He was always invited to mingle in the councils of the Cherokees during his residence among them, but while he often met them as a friend, he never entered their councils or joined in their deliberations. The chief counseled with him often about his people, nor was he long in becoming acquainted with the oppressions and glaring injustice which had been inflicted on them by the agents to whom their affairs had been entrusted in their migration to that country. In exchange for the territory they had occupied lower down on the Arkansas, they were, by treaty, to receive twenty-eight dollars per capita, which amounted, in the aggregate, to a vast sum. Instead of paying this money, as they should have done, certificates were issued by the agents, under the pretence they had no money, and as paper is always considered worthless by the Indians, merchants, who had connections with the agents, purchased up these certificates in a fraudulent manner for a mere song, representing that it was very uncertain whether the government ever could send them money. A mackinaw blanket, a flask of powder, and even a bottle of whisky, was often all these defrauded exiles ever got for the plighted faith of our government.

After seeing these and other frauds constantly practiced on the Indians, Houston finally determined to make them known at Washington. He visited Washington early in 1832 and made such representations as caused an investigation into their conduct, and not less than five agents and sub-agents were promptly removed.

These removed men made lots of trouble for Houston from that time on, but he won by his act the eternal friendship of the Indians, who helped him in many ways later in his life.

The Hero of Ticonderoga.

(By Willis L. Norton, Vergennes, Vt.)

My article is about Ethan Allen. He was a brave man and the way he went through hardships and imprisonment showed what a staunch patriot he was.

He started his career by becoming a leader of the Green Mountain Boys, who were a company of settlers who were in a controversy with New York respecting territorial claims.

The government even went so far as to declare Allen and his associates to be outlaws, and offered fifty pounds in colonial currency for his capture.

There might have been serious trouble if the Revolution had not turned their attention to a foreign enemy.

When the news of the battle of Lexington reached those remote settlers, in less than thirty days afterward Colonel Allen and some of his Green Mountain Boys and Massachusetts militia, together with Colonel Benedict Arnold and some Connecticut men, captured Fort Ticonderoga and Crown Point from the British.

When Allen thundered at the door of the commander of the garrison at Ticonderoga after the soldiers were subdued and that frightened official asked by what authority he demanded a surrender, Ethan Allen's reply was, "By the great Jehovah and the Continental Congress!"

It was on the morning of that day that Congress was to assemble at Philadelphia.

Early in the autumn he went to Canada with a force, intending to capture Montreal.

But he was made a prisoner, put in irons on board a vessel and sent to England to be hanged.

Great crowds flocked to see him on his arrival, for the fame of his exploits had reached England. His grotesque garb attracted great attention. He was regarded almost as a strange, wild beast of the forest, and for more than a year he was kept a close prisoner.

In January, 1776, Colonel Allen was sent in a frigate to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he remained in jail until the following October, when he was taken to New York, at that time the British headquarters.

Here he was kept, part of the time on parole on Long Island and part of the time in the Provost and other prisons in New York until May, 1778, when he was exchanged for Colonel Campbell, of the British Army.

His health had suffered much during his imprisonment, but he went to headquarters and offered his services to General Washington.

He arrived at his home in Bennington, Vt., on the evening of the last day of May and he was welcomed by booming cannons, and the huzzas of the people.

He was now commissioned major-general of the State militia, but the war was so nearly over that he did not have a chance to do any more fighting for his country.

I think many of the boys will be surprised to learn of the long time he spent in imprisonment. He deserves all the honor that has been given his name, because even after the terrible experience he had gone through he was ready to go through it all over again for the sake of his country.

Hunting and Trapping Department.

This department is brimful of information and ideas of interest to the young trapper and hunter. Write us if you have any questions to ask concerning these subjects, and they will be answered in a special column. Address all communications to the "Hunting and Trapping Department."

Hoop Nooses.

Snares are among the most interesting and ingenious of the trap kind, besides being the most sure and efficacious. They possess one advantage over all other traps; they can be made in the woods and out of the commonest material.

Let the young trapper supply himself with a small, sharp hatchet, and a stout, keen-edged jack-knife—these being the only tools required. He should also provide himself with a coil of fine brass "sucker wire," or a quantity of horsehair nooses, a small ball of tough twine, and a pocketful of bait, such as apples, corn, oats and the like, of course depending upon the game he intends to trap. With these his requirements are complete, and he has the material for a score of capital snares which will do him much excellent service, if properly constructed.

One of the best of these is made as follows: Take two flat pieces of wood about a foot long and two inches wide, and lay one across the other. At the center where they intersect, drive a nail fastening the two pieces together. Now drive a short post in the ground making the top about eight inches from the ground.

The crosspieces are now nailed to the top of the upright.

A noose is now fastened to each end. Each noose should be about four inches in diameter. To make it, a small loop should be twisted on one end of the wire, and the other end of the wire passed through it, thus making a slipping loop, which will be found to work very easily. The crosspieces are tacked to the top of the upright, and a noose suspended from each end—the bait adjusted as there seen.

We have mentioned horsehair nooses as being desirable, and they are commonly used; but, as it takes considerable time to make them, and the wire answering the purpose full as well, we rather recommend the wire in preference. We will give a few simple directions, however, for the making of the horsehair nooses, in case our readers might desire to use them instead.

Select long, stout hairs from the tail of any horse (we would recommend, that it be a good-tempered horse), take one of the hairs and double it in the middle, hold the double between the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, letting the two ends hang from the under side of the thumb, and keeping the hairs between the thumb and finger, about a third of an inch apart. Now proceed to twist the two hairs toward the end of the finger, letting them twist together as the loop emerges on the upper side of the thumb.

A little practice will overcome what at first seems very difficult. To keep the two hairs between the fingers at the right distance of separation, and at the same time to twist them and draw the loop from between the fingers as they are twisted, seems quite a complicated operation; and so it will be found at first. But when once mastered by practice, the twisting of five nooses a minute will be an easy matter. When the entire length of the hairs are twisted, the ends should be cut off even and then passed through the small loop at the folded end. The noose is then ready to be fastened to the main string of support. Horsehair nooses are commonly used in nearly all snares, as they are always to be had, and possess considerable strength. The fine brass wire is also extensively used, and the writer rather prefers it. It is very strong and slips easily, besides doing away with the trouble of twisting the loops, which to some might be a very difficult and tedious operation. We recommend the wire, and shall allude to it chiefly in the future, although the horsehair may be substituted whenever desired.

The Poacher's Snare.

This snare is the one in most common use among the poachers of England, hence its name. The pieces are three in number, and may be cut from pine wood, affording easy and profitable employment for the jack-knife during odd hours and rainy days, when time hangs heavily.

The branch of a sapling is intended to be used in setting the trap. The pieces are so simple in form and easy

of construction that a sufficient number for fifty traps might be whittled in less than two hours, by any smart boy who is at all "handy" with his jack-knife.

If a few good broad shingles can be found, the work is even much easier—mere splitting and notching being then all that is necessary. The bait stick should be about eight inches long, pointed at one end, and supplied with a notch in the other at about half-an-inch from the tip. The upright stick should be considerably shorter than the bait stick, and have a length of about ten inches, one end being nicely pointed, and the broad side of the other extremity supplied with a notch similar to the bait stick. About four inches from the blunt end, and on the narrow side of the stick, a square notch should be cut, sufficiently large to admit the bait stick loosely. The catch piece now remains. This should be about two and a half inches in length, half-an-inch in width, and beveled off at each end into a flat edge.

A hundred of these pieces will make a small bundle, and may be easily carried by the young trapper, together with his other necessities, as he starts off into the woods. He will thus be supplied with parts for thirty-three traps, all ready to be set, only requiring the stakes for the pens, which may be easily cut in the woods.

Having selected a flexible sapling about five feet in length, and having stripped it of its branches, proceed to adjust the pieces. Take one of the upright sticks and insert it firmly in the ground, with its upper notch facing the sapling, and at about four feet distant from it.

Bend down the "springer," and by its force determine the required length for the draw string attaching one end to the tip of the sapling, and the other near the end of a catch piece, the latter having its beveled side uppermost. The wire noose should then be attached to the draw string about six inches above the catchpiece. A pen should now be constructed so that the game will have to reach the bait through the noose. Its entrance should be on the side furthest from the springer, and should be so built as that the peg in the ground shall be at the back part of the enclosure. The pen being finished, the trap may be set.

Insert the bait stick with bait attached into the square notch in the side of the upright peg; or, if desired, it may be adjusted by a pivot or nail through both sticks, always letting the baited end project toward the opening. Draw down the catch piece, and fit its ends into the notches in the back of the upright peg and extremity of the bait stick. By now pulling the latter slightly, and gently withdrawing the hand, the pieces will hold themselves together, only awaiting a lift at the bait of dislodge them. Adjust the wire loop at the opening of the pen, and you may leave the trap with the utmost confidence in its ability to take care of itself, and any unlucky intruder who tries to steal its property.

Most of the snares are constructed from rough twigs, as these are always to be found in the woods, and with a little practice are easily cut and shaped into the desired forms. If desired, however, many of them may be whittled from pine wood like the foregoing, and the pieces carried in a bundle, ready for immediate use. In either case, whether made from the rough twigs or seasoned wood, it is a good plan to have them already prepared, and thus save time at the trapping ground when time is more valuable.

The Portable Snare.

This is simply a modification of the snare just described, but possesses decided advantages over it in many respects. In the first place, it requires little or no protection in the shape of an enclosure. It can be set in trees or in swamps, or in short in any place where an upright elastic branch can be found or adjusted. Like the foregoing, it is to be commended for its portability, fifty or sixty of the pieces making but a small parcel, and furnishing material for a score of traps. We call it the "portable snare," partly in order to distinguish it from the one just described, but chiefly because this particular variety is generally called by that name in countries where it is most used.

It is composed of three pieces, all to be cut from a shingle or thin board. Let the first be about eight inches long, and three-quarters of an inch in width. This is for the upright. An oblong mortise should be cut through this piece, one inch in length, and beginning at about an inch from the end of the stick. Three inches from the other end a notch should be made. The bait stick should be four or five inches long, one end fitting easily into the mortise, where it should be secured by a wire or smooth nail driven through so as to form a hinge, on which it will work easily. On the upper side of this stick, and two inches distant from the pivot, a notch should be cut, similar to that in the upright. The catch piece should be about two inches in length, and beveled off to a flat edge at each end. This completes the pieces.

To set the trap, it is only necessary to find some stout sapling, after which the upright stick may be attached to it close to the ground by the aid of two pieces of stout iron wire, twisted firmly around both. It is well to cut slight grooves at each end of the upright for the reception of the wires, in order to prevent slipping. Tie a strong piece of twine around one end of the catch piece, knotting it on the beveled side. Cut the string about two feet in length, and attach the other end to the tip of the sapling. Adjust the bait stick on its pivot. Now lower the catch piece and lodge the knotted end beneath the notch in the upright and the other end in the notch on the bait stick.

Care should be taken to set the catch pieces as slightly as possible in the notches, in order to insure sensitiveness. At about four inches from the catch piece, the wire noose should be attached and arranged in a circle directly around the bait. By now backing up the trap with a few sticks to prevent the bait from being approached from behind, the thing is complete, and woe to the misguided creature that dares to test its efficacy. By adjusting the drawstring so far as the upper end of the catch piece, the leverage on the bait stick is so slight as to require a mere touch to overcome it; and we may safely say that, when this trap is once baited, it will stay baited, so far as animal intruders are concerned, as we never yet have seen a rabbit or bird skillful enough to remove the tempting morsel before being summarily dealt with by the noose on guard duty.

JESSE JAMES STORIES



Jesse James.

WE were the first publishers in the world to print the famous stories of the James Boys, written by that remarkable man, W. B. Lawson, whose name is a watchword with our boys. We have had many imitators, and in order that no one shall be deceived in accepting the spurious for the real, we are now publishing the best stories of the James Boys, by Mr. Lawson, in a New Library entitled "The Jesse James Stories," one of our big five-cent weeklies, and a sure winner with the boys. A number of issues have already appeared, and these which follow will be equally good; in fact, the best of their kind in the world.

STREET & SMITH, Publishers, New York.

NICK CARTER STORIES



Nick Carter.

THE best known detective in the world is Nick Carter. Stories by this noted sleuth are issued regularly in "Nick Carter Weekly" (price five cents), and all his work is written for us. It may interest the patrons and readers of the Nick Carter Series of Detective Stories to know that these famous stories will soon be produced upon the stage under unusually elaborate circumstances. Arrangements have just been completed between the publishers and Manager F. C. Whitney, to present the entire set of Nick Carter stories in dramatic form. The first play of the series will be brought out next fall.

STREET & SMITH, Publishers, New York.

BUFFALO BILL STORIES

The only publication authorized by the Hon. Wm. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill).



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WE were the publishers of the first story ever written of the famous and world-renowned Buffalo Bill, the great hero whose life has been one succession of exciting and thrilling incidents combined with great successes and accomplishments, all of which will be told in a series of grand stories which we are now placing before the American Boys. The popularity they have already obtained shows what the boys want, and is very gratifying to the publishers.

STREET & SMITH, Publishers, New York.

DIAMOND DICK STORIES



Diamond Dick.

THE celebrated Diamond Dick stories can only be found in "Diamond Dick, Jr., the Boys' Best Weekly." Diamond Dick and his son Bertie are the most unique and fascinating heroes of Western romance. The scenes, and many of the incidents, in these exciting stories are taken from real life. Diamond Dick stories are conceded to be the best stories of the West, and are all copyrighted by us. The weekly is the same size and price as this publication, with handsome illuminated cover. Price, five cents.

STREET & SMITH, Publishers, New York.